

THE AMERICAN

# RATIONALIST

September

1958

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OUR POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY is best expressed by Alexander Pope in his "Essay on Man":  
*"Know then thyself. Presume not God to scan, the proper study of mankind is man."*

NEGATIVELY, we stand with Jefferson, eternally hostile to all forms of tyranny over the  
minds of men.

- **SETTING THE COURSE II.**

an Editorial

by John J. Kessler, Ph.D., Ch.E.

- **NIHILISM**

by Arthur B. Hewson

- **A QUOTE FROM**

**"THE UNLEASHING OF  
EVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT"**

by Oscar Riddle, Ph.D.

- **GIORDANO BRUNO, THE  
FORGOTTEN PHILOSOPHER**

Part Two

by John J. Kessler, Ph.D., Ch.E.

- **EXCERPTS FROM "MAGNA  
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- **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

by Edd Doerr

- **WHAT IS IT TO BE  
A RATIONALIST?**

by Harry E. Mongold

- **HUMAN PROGRESS**

by Alvan L. Davis



George W. Elderkin, Professor Emeritus,  
Princeton University

- **HERESY**

by Geo. W. Elderkin, Ph.D.

*The Magazine for the Entire Rationalist Movement*

NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT . . . BOOKS . . . COMMENTS

35c

# SETTING THE COURSE

II.

by JOHN J. KESSLER, Ph.D.



John J. Kessler, Ph.D.

Edd Doerr's article in AR July 1958 was a keen analysis, I thought, of a situation confronting liberal-minded people in their group activities. They are discontented people who have become more or less contented with their discontent. They have experienced a stunted growth. They rest in their dogmatic slumbers and all that sort of thing.

I propose to develop the theme down to a working blue print for reconstruction, rehabilitation and greater forward moving social advance.

Since I am talking about Rationalists, Ethicals, Humanists, Unitarians, let me use a short label, I am talking about REHU. This might mean you.

These four groups have much in common.

1—They consist of members who have rejected the conventional and ancestral traditions about the nature of the universe and man. Each group has a philosophy based on a Weltanschauung rather than a Himmelschauung.

2—Each group is largely autonomous, or tries to be. There are no Cardinals, Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Priests, Saints or Holy Relics. The services given by leaders, professional or lay, claim no divine sanction or authority. Each has to rely on his individual skill and experience in trying to be of service to his fellow man.

3—Each group is largely ingrown. A large number of its members have a superiority complex, an "I am better than thou" attitude. Such folks have been called Pharisees.

4—The present activities of each group are largely of the nature of talking and writing "words, words, words." The professional leaders spend much of their time in preaching the party line and in keeping the home fires burning.

So much for a raw qualitative analysis, over simplified and neglecting many minor values.

Let's get down to an immediate and practical challenge that faces each group or individual. Wherever there is an itch to help make the old world over into the new world of the future it is the conclusion of this

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## *the pic on the cover*

We present here a Great American, George W. Elderkin, Professor Emeritus of Princeton University. We hail his proven devotion to the basic principles of American freedom and, for his zeal in their behalf, we wish to add a laurel crown to the academic honors already his.

We cite him for this distinction because:—

1st—He devoted four full years out of ten years of an honorable retirement to a sustained effort to alert the Princeton community to the nature and purpose behind the presumptuous and arrogant attacks upon the principle of academic freedom and upon the integrity of individual members of the faculty regularly made by the Jesuit priest, "Father" Halton at Princeton.

This involved, among other things, the collecting, compiling and publishing of four complete brochures covering all the publicity and comment, pro and con, arising from the controversy. This he did at much personal labor and expense and thereby contributed mightily to putting this priest in his place.

2nd—Dr. Elderkin rendered a further great public service by calling attention to the omissions in Whitehead's "The Story of the FBI" which brought out the startling extent of Catholic infiltration into this organization which is charged with defending constitutional principles which the Hierarchy condemns.

Dr. Elderkin graduated from Dartmouth in 1902, spent four years at Johns Hopkins specializing in Classical Languages, four years as a member of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece, and participated in the archeological excavations in Ancient Corinth. Returning home, he became associated with the department of Art and Archeology at Princeton for 38 years until his retirement in 1948.

Jesus would have us to forgive our enemies, but he will damn his.—E. M. MacDonald, N. Y.

writer that each group or individual has got to stop spending so much time in talking or listening to each other. We must begin to tool toward more specific activities in the local community. I offer now a couple of down to earth specific suggestions as illustrative examples of what I am talking about. Each area will have its own particular opportunity, more or less different from any other.

1—A group can offer some educational free courses to the community. They can be publicized in the community. It will be news and get the consideration of newsmen. Trained teachers can offer classes in, say, Esperanto, Philosophy, Great Religions, Creative Writing, etc.

2—Each group or individual can become the center for distributing in large quantity, inexpensive tracts to a local mailing list of Preachers, Rabbis, Teachers, Civic Leaders, carefully edited, no slam bang stuff. You cannot do business with people when they are mad at you. Suppose a few hundred persons would commit themselves to distribute a hundred tracts a month for a year. That would be a real missionary effort, far more worthwhile than watching the TV or playing the pinball machine. It would not be long before a million tracts reach the unreached.

Of the 160,000,000 people in the U.S.A. in 1958 I venture to guess that 150,000,000 sound thinkers never heard of emancipated Rationalists, Ethicals, Humanists or Unitarians. They may think of themselves as the salt of the earth, but it takes more than salt.

The two blue prints above are only offered as suggestions. One Humanist local group is already tooling for (1) educational classes and (2) the editing, printing and distribution of tracts, with the needed help of course of many hands and pennies.

All this boils down to a blue print of giving something to the community beyond exchanging verbal gifts within the group.

I appreciate the invitation of Arthur Hewson to write a short editorial on a subject that concerns him and many others. Let us do less griping, less talking, with more vision and more planning of a service kind.

Do you realize, REHU folks, that you are the mutations of this generation that will set the patterns of the future, that is, if you don't go to sleep on the job!

Join the International Pen-Pals Club of Freethinkers all over the world by writing to Dave Shipper, 5 Kyveilog Street, Cardiff, Wales, England.

All Christian brain power is not shallow but quite a percentage is lying fallow. (J. M. Chadwell).

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## HERESY

by GEO. W. ELDERKIN,  
Prof. Emeritus, Princeton University

The conspicuous survival of the word heresy in the vocabulary of Christianity today is largely the unenviable achievement of the Roman church. The sinister emphasis which this church places upon heresy and the heretic raises the primary question "What is the original significance of these terms?" The word heresy is derived from the Greek **hairesis** 'choice,' with no implication as to whether the choice is good or bad. Its derivative, the adjective **hairetikos**, means 'able to choose.' The base of these words is **hairesthai** (1) 'to take to oneself' (2) 'to choose.' They indicate an innate human right, that of 'making a choice.'

A secondary use of the words was their application by the orthodox (those who held upright, i.e. correct opinions) to the heterodox (those who held other opinions). The orthodox accepted the early formulation of Christian creed while the heterodox exercised freedom in choosing what to believe and what to reject. In the eyes of the orthodox such freedom of choice was sinful. Here was the beginning of tribulation for those who did not wish to have an established belief rammed down their throats.

It is very important to note that **hairesis** and its derivatives **hairetikos** and **hairesiarches** 'a leader of a sect' as well as the proper name **Christos** 'the anointed' are Greek words which the Roman church transliterated. The Latin **haeresis** designated a 'school of thought' and secondarily 'an heretical religious doctrine.' Greek Christian heresy thus antedated the Roman use of the terms in question but it could not offer a precedent for the inquisition which, being Roman, naturally received the Latin name **inquisitio** meaning 'a searching, an examination.'

The Catholic conception of heretics as sinners was destined to have a long history and to aggravate, rather



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than alleviate, human misery down through the centuries. The Roman church has never renounced its assumed right to exterminate unbelievers. It has been unable to substitute humane persuasion for the extremes of physical brutality. Its hatred of the schismatic Yugoslavs produced, under the aegis of Hitler, a frightful slaughter even of children who innocently harbored 'error.' Throughout this inquisition the present Pope, although he has declared that "all men are brothers" and knows that the love of Christ "passeth knowledge," stood idly by and quite forgot the divine command "Thou shalt not kill." He could have prevented the massacre of innocents in Yugoslavia. **The Brooklyn Tablet** (November 1938), apparently in anticipation of a German victory over both England and the United States with a corresponding freedom for the Vatican to repeat its performance in Yugoslavia, declared "Heresy (i.e. religious belief based upon freedom of choice) is an awful crime against God, and those who start a heresy are more guilty than they who are traitors to the civil government. If the state has the right to punish treason with death, the principle is the same that concedes to the spiritual authority (the Roman Catholic) the power of life and death over the arch-traitor to truth and divine revelation, and law and government."

The author of this statement that heresy is an "awful crime against God" does not include Jesus and his mother because they do not belong to the older tradition which transferred to Jehovah the brutality of ancient monarchs. Since the crime is against God, he should punish the heretical criminals, but since He does not, the Church feels obligated to do so. The designation of the Pope as God on earth justifies, in Catholic thinking, the right (and duty?) of the former to impose retribution here on earth in accord with the pronouncement of Jehovah in **Deuteronomy** (XXXII, 35): "To me belongeth vengeance."

Leo XIII added insult to murder when he declared that "proceedings taken against heretics did not constitute persecution, for persecution is unlawful and unjust, and the Catholic church forbids the least injustice to anyone (!)." His murderous instinct is so deeply implanted in the heart of the Roman church that its encyclopedia (XIV, p. 768) blandly states: "Heretics may not only be excommunicated but also put to death." This vengeful instinct puts Catholic clerical despots in close communion with dictators like Pavelic, Franco and Trujillo.

When the president of Notre Dame, in a recent address to the graduates of Dartmouth College advised them

"to lay out a pattern of belief" did he mean that such pattern might be Protestant or non-sectarian, and therefore heretical? Certainly not. He made his recommendation general so that all could interpret it, each in his own way, and thus gave the impression of tolerance. Dartmouth extended to him the hand of fellowship, and he avoided an open repudiation of the ideals of the liberal college to which his church, and consequently he, is unyieldingly antagonistic. Contrast the treatment of this honored Catholic with that of the Protestant ministers who are not allowed to enter the grounds of Holy Cross at Worcester. What can be expected from a theology which holds that the teaching of every child to read and write is "one of the heresies of democracy" (*America*, Oct. 1931). Let us hope that non-sectarian colleges, including Dartmouth, remember their heretical classification.

The Roman Catholic church, in arrogating to itself the extermination of heresy, assumes as axiomatic that it is the one true church. This is quite erroneous. The mother church of all Christianity, if there is one, is the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. To this day a Greek priest, not a Roman, sits beside the tomb of Jesus. There Jesus died and was buried. He never was in Rome. Hence the church of St. Peter is definitely secondary. It is still a question whether even St. Peter got to Rome. Leo XIII promised a cardinal's cap to the archaeologist Marucchi if he could produce definite evidence that Peter had been in Rome. He did not get the coveted cap. The papal announcement that Peter's tomb has been discovered in the church which bears his name has yet to be confirmed archaeologically.

The claimed supremacy of the Roman church over all Christian churches was the logical concomitant of the supremacy of Rome over all the nations of its empire. About 150 A.D. one Lucius who had been initiated into the rites of Isis at Corinth went to Rome to be initiated into the mysteries of Osiris (Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*). The sequence of these related initiations shows that the rites at Rome were the culminating and therefore the more important of the two. Even this Egyptian cult felt the spell of imperial Rome. All roads, even of religion, led to the eternal city.

For the information of our readers: J. Edgar Hoover is a Presbyterian, Representative Walter a Lutheran and Senator Jenner a Methodist.

Contentment may be good for cows but contented people are not likely to accomplish much.

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## NIHILISM

by ARTHUR B. HEWSON

The political nihilist or anarchist, as he sometimes is called, holds that all government is an evil.

Nevertheless, History's record of Man's age-old struggle to achieve an ordered society proves this an utter absurdity. In fact, it should be perfectly obvious that the achievement of a proper balance as between the individual's rights on the one hand and his responsibilities for the commonweal on the other, can come about only through close group cooperation in some form of democratic governmental organization. At least, this has been true in the era since individuals have been recognized as having rights.

However, when one looks into the origin of this violently negative philosophy, it becomes quite understandable that such a curious attitude should have developed in the environment from whence it came.

Imagine yourself one of a handful who had been able to raise themselves above the level of a vast, inert and almost totally illiterate population in a country held helplessly bound under the twin tyrannies of a feudal state and an authoritarian church working in close cooperation. Wouldn't you strike out in blind and savage desperation against every manifestation of either tyranny: especially when you recognized them as mere phases of the same thing—government?

This was one of the first evidences of an awakening by the Russian people under the tsars. With this picture before you, it is not difficult to realize why all considerations of logic and reason were swept aside in a sustained emotional storm which eventually released all the pent-up force of their passionate resentment of the coldly savage repression of their legitimate desires by their government.

The religious nihilist, likewise, holds that all religion is an evil. Once he had good reason for this belief, for there was a time when this was too true of all the religions of the Western world. The Inquisition in Spain with its countless torturings and burnings, at Rome, the torture of Galileo and Savonarola, the latter's hanging and the burning of Bruno, Bloody Mary's 330 heretic burnings in England and similar fanatical atrocities by the Protestant, Calvin, at Geneva, these all tell a distressing story of Man's savage inhumanity to Man in the name of religion. The Roman church is still capable of these things in places where it is dominant as witness its wholesale murder of the Greek Orthodox in Yugoslavia through the Ustachi in World War II.

There was a time in the English-speaking world, during the period of Protestant fundamentalist ascendancy when it was inadvisable for one to proclaim his dissent from the general pattern of Christian orthodoxy. It meant social ostracism, employment discrimination and even denial of the right to run for public office or, in some states, to be permitted to testify in a court of law. The honest dissenter had every right to resent this infringement upon his rights as an individual.

As a result many dissenters developed a "lone wolf" complex. They would not accept the "if you can't lick 'em, join 'em" idea nor would they consider getting together with like-minded individuals to develop the strength necessary to combat discrimination against them. For the former, their courage and integrity is to be commended but for the latter, they deserve criticism for a lack of good judgment which still manifests itself in a great deal of uncompromising anti-ism.

Their judgment of religion per se as, necessarily, a thing of evil is just as wrong as was the political nihilist's judgment that government per se was an evil. It becomes a question of what you mean by the words "government" and "religion."

"The only permanent thing in the world is change" and it is a far cry from tsarism's twin tyrannies to our American democracy. Imperfect though it still is, nevertheless, we are more in the mood to fight for it than to destroy it.

We now recognize the counterfeit nature and the worthlessness of the supernaturally-based religions of the world—all of them—in spite of the persistence of their outward forms. However this does not alter the fact that religion—now meaning a way of life based upon our accumulated and evolving human experience, is a distinct human need. Human history is the best evidence.

Man ever has sought an adequate understanding of the Cosmos and his place in it. He ever has sought an acceptable pattern for living in which he could find peace of mind, freedom from fear, a maximum satisfaction in his day to day existence and hope for the future for his children. This requires organizations to proclaim Rationalist principles to the multitude. To make head against the superstitions of our age, there must be cradle to grave education provided. Who of us is born like the Greek goddess, Pallas Athene, who sprang, fully armed, from the head of her father, Zeus?

Furthermore, Atheism is not enough. Atheism is like the first stage of a rocket which generates enough power to overcome the gravitational pull of tradition and to carry us beyond the atmosphere of superstition and fantasy into the realm of reality; leaving us free there-

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after to explore it fully and develop the full human potential. Atheism is a mere stepping stone to understanding of the purpose of human existence. Overemphasis of it is nonsense.

The Protestant churches, aside from their minor fundamentalist groups, have become shot through and through with Rationalist thinking in spite of their "men of God." Their continuing cohesion results more from their satisfaction of the social needs of their membership rather than any particular devotion to the ancient fantasies upon which they originally were founded. Our own failure to provide comparable facilities also is a major factor. These churches manifest no inclination toward an outreach for political power as do the Romans. They are no menace to Rationalism. In fact, they show an increasing leaning toward the more constructive Rationalist ideas.

In the evolution in the thinking of Western Man regarding religion this last century and more, there have developed groups such as the Unitarians, the Ethical Culturists and the Scientific Humanists. The last two are definitely in the Rationalist camp and the Humanist grounded Unitarian churches are more and more reaching toward ascendancy in denominational affairs. Hence we should regard them as friends and cooperate with them in common cause whenever Roman encroachments require development of our full strength. Let us forget our nihilism and form the Rationalist phalanx with all our actual and potential friends.

## A Quote from "The Unleashing of Evolutionary Thought"

By OSCAR RIDDLE, Ph.D.

Man's chief INTELLECTUAL problem up to our time is already resolved. Naturalism, not supernaturalism, sweepingly defines man's relations to the universe. Intellectually, the contest between theology and science is finished, though that between society and institutionalized religion may have only begun. That only a fraction of the people of any nation is aware of these developments is a most meaningful matter, but the hard core of the older intellectual problem no longer remains. What we have instead are practical and pressing educational, political and social challenges to understanding and adjustment. And the simple fact that live discussions of these pressing adjustments are so nearly absent from today's press, platform, book and rostrum is the one true marvel of our age and time. It is as if the celebrated



Forum—forgetting warm debate on thought, on state, on jurisprudence—had blandly turned to timely gossip on winemaking, war, and products of the kitchen.

The scope and purposes of this book involve three kindred areas of thought and action: First, the main and meaningful message of unmitigated evolutionary thought—particularly the basis on which it discredits a belief in soul, and the supernatural. Second, the present worldwide restrictions on the spread of evolutionary fact, insight and incentive by the cults of supernaturalism—the organized religions—and the threat of these restrictions to society, freedom and democracy. Third, a cursory look at the good and harm done by current organized religions which suggests that SUCH religions are dispensable and expendable. These three areas relate thought to act and, however brief and sketchy their treatment, they belong together. . . . It seems evident and essential that thoughtful people should extend the area of their firm understanding and thereafter use their enlightenment and social maturity against trends identified as dangerous.

## GIORDANO BRUNO, THE FORGOTTEN PHILOSOPHER

By JOHN J. KESSLER, Ph.D., Ch.E.

### PART 2

Bruno had no secure place in either Protestant or Roman Catholic religious communities. He carried out his long fight against terrible odds. He had lived in Switzerland and France and was now in England and left there for Germany. He translated books, read proofs, and got together groups and lectured for whatever he could get out of it. It requires no great stretch of the imagination to picture him as a man who mended his own clothes, who was often cold, hungry and shabby. There are only a few things that we know about Bruno with great certainty and these facts are the ideas which he left behind in his practically forgotten books, the bootleg literature of their day. After twenty years in exile we can picture him as homesick, craving the sound of his own native tongue and the companionship of his own countrymen. But he continued to write books. In his book *De la Causa, principio et uno*, On Cause, Principle, and Unity we find prophetic phrases:

"This entire globe, this star, not being subject to death, and dissolution and annihilation being impossible anywhere in Nature, from time to time renews itself by changing and altering all its parts. There is no absolute

## DEMOCRACY IN POST-WAR ITALY

by Edd Doerr

During the twenty plus years of Mussolini's (mis)rule in Italy, democracy all but completely vanished. But what of Democracy in Italy since Il Duce's demise? In many respects it has been restored, but in some very important respects it has not. I need only cite the Bellandi case, which is at this writing still before the courts and about which I am currently preparing a lengthier article, and the recent case of the Rome daily "Il Paese Sera".

In the latter case, the Italian Ministry of Exterior Relations received in February a note from the Vatican demanding the prosecution of the Rome daily "Il Paese Sera" for the publication of an article by the French novelist Roger Peyrefitte, whose books "The Keys of St. Peter" and "Knights of Malta" had previously angered the Holy See. The Vatican's official news and propaganda organ "Osservatore Romano" said that the first page of Peyrefitte's article contained "ignoble insults against the Supreme Pontiff" which were "Villainous, scurrilous, ignorant, presumptuous and ridiculous". (These pretty adjectives must have been gathering dust since their previous use on Paul Blanshard and Avro Manhattan.)

According to Mussolini's Lateran Pact of 1929, which the post-Mussolini governments have never repudiated, the Italian government may prosecute (or persecute) any newspaper which says unkindly things about the head of any state. The Pope is, of course, the dictator of Vatican City, the last official remnant of the once extensive Papal States.

Freedom of speech and of the press, then, are not as safe in

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the Italian "democracy" as they should be. Further, this incident indicates the present Italian government is less "liberal" than the ones which preceded Mussolini . . . governments that were about as anti-clerical as those of Mexico of the past three decades.

A further lesson to be learned is that making "deals" with the Vatican is a sure way to erode all of the basic freedoms.

## NOT SUCH GOOD FEELING

Sir:

When Rev. Gustave A. Weigel, theologian of a Maryland Jesuit college, says that Catholic church attendance is up, that increased attendance is due to the superior liturgy service, that Protestants visit Catholic services to see how it's done, he's talking sheer nonsense. Catholics are conditioned to attend church virtually from the cradle, much as Pavlov's dogs were conditioned to salivate at the ringing of a bell. The good reverend might be more concerned to explain why Italy and France have the largest Communist parties in the West. If it weren't for Protestant America, both these countries would probably have long since been taken over by the Reds and the Vatican itself put out of business.

J. R. Heilbron, Los Angeles  
"Time"

Sir:

"Era of Good Feeling?" I admit it is a good question, but so long as the Roman hierarchy has a strangle hold on the minds of 36-plus million (I wonder about the validity of their count) Americans, this hoped-for good feeling can never exist.

Art Kucinski, Oneonta, N.Y.  
"Time"

## I AM GOD

AND THERE IS NONE ELSE!

Write for free details. Its DYNAMITE!

Zahr R. Vollmer

58 Washington St. Denver 3, Colo.

up or down, as Aristotle taught; no absolute position in space; but the position of a body is relative to that of other bodies. Everywhere there is incessant relative change in position throughout the universe, and the observer is always at the centre of things."

His other works were *The Infinity, the Universe and Its Worlds*, *The Transport of Intrepid Souls*, and *Cabala of the Steed like unto Pegasus with the Addition of the Ass of Cyllene*, an ironical discussion of the pretensions of superstition. This "ass," says Bruno, is to be found everywhere, not only in the church but in courts of law and even in colleges. In his book *The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast* he flays the pedantries he finds in Catholic and Protestant cultures. In yet another book *The Threefold Leas and Measure of the Three Speculative Sciences and the Principle of Many Practical Arts*, we find a discussion on a theme which was to be handled in a later century by the French philosopher Descartes. The book was written five years before Descartes was born and in it he says: "Who so itcheth to Philosophy must set to work by putting all things to the doubt."

He also wrote *Of the Unit, Quantity and Shape* and another work *On Images, Signs and Ideas*, as well as *On What is Immense and Innumerable; Exposition of the Thirty Seals and List of Metaphysical Terms for Taking the Study of Logic and Philosophy in Hand*. His most interesting title is *One Hundred Sixty Articles Directed Against the Mathematics and Philosophers of the Day*. One of his last works, *The Fastenings of Kind*, was unfinished.

It is easy to get an impression of the reputation which Bruno had created by the year 1582 in the minds of the clerical authorities of southern Europe. He had written of an infinite universe which had left no room for that greater infinite conception which is called God. He could not conceive that God and nature could be separate and distinct entities as taught by Genesis, as taught by the Church and as even taught by Aristotle. He preached a philosophy which made the mysteries of the virginity of Mary, of the crucifixion and the mass, meaningless. He was so naive that he could not think of his own mental pictures as being really heresies. He thought of the Bible as a book which only the ignorant could take literally. The Church's methods were, to say the least, unfortunate, and it encouraged ignorance from the instinct of self-preservation.

Bruno wrote: "Everything, however men may deem it assured and evident, proves, when it is brought under discussion to be no less doubtful than are extravagant and absurd beliefs." He coined the phrase "Libertes philosophica." The right to think, to dream, if you like, to make

philosophy. After 14 years of wandering about Europe Bruno turned his steps toward home. Perhaps he was homesick. Some writers have it that he was framed. For Bruno to go back to Italy is as strange a paradox as that of the rest of his life.

He was invited to Venice by a young man whose name was Mocenigo, who offered him a home and who then brought charges against him before the Inquisition. The case dragged on. He was a prisoner in the Republic of Venice but a greater power wanted him and he was surrendered to Rome. For six years, between 1593 and 1600 he lay in a Papal prison. Was he forgotten, tortured? Whatever historical records there are never have been published by those authorities who have them. In the year 1600 a German scholar Schoppius happened to be in Rome and wrote about Bruno, who was interrogated several times by the Holy Office and convicted by the chief theologians. At one time he obtained forty days to consider his position; by and by he promised to recant, then renewed his "follies." Then he got another forty days for deliberation but did nothing but baffle the pope and the Inquisition. After two years in the custody of the Inquisitor he was taken on February ninth to the palace of the Grand Inquisitor to hear his sentence on bended knee, before the expert assessors and the Governor of the City.

Bruno answered the sentence of death by fire with the threatening: "Perhaps you, my judges, pronounce this sentence against me with greater fear than I receive it." He was given eight more days to see whether he would repent. But it was no use. He was taken to the stake and as he was dying a crucifix was presented to him, but he pushed it away with fierce scorn.

They were wise in getting rid of him for he wrote no more books, but they should have strangled him when he was born. As it turned out, they did not get rid of him at all. His fate was not an unusual one for heretics; this strange madcap genius was quickly forgotten. His works were honored by being placed on the Index expurgatorius on August 7, 1603, and his books became rare. They never obtained any great popularity.

In the early part of the 18th Century English deists rediscovered Bruno and tried to excite the imagination of the public with the retelling of the story of his life, but this aroused no particular enthusiasm.

The enthusiasm of German philosophy reached the subject of Bruno when Jacobi (1743-1819) drew attention to the genius of Bruno and German thinkers generally recognized his genius but they did not read his books. In the latter part of the 19th Century Italian scholars began to be intrigued with Bruno and for a while "Bruno

## ESCAPE

### "God's Will" Attitude vs. Basic Integrity (Church News Service)

Dr. William B. Oglesby, professor at the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., speaking at All Soul's (Unitarian) Church, Washington, D. C., has declared that modern psychotherapy as well as the "religious revival" often promote a life-destructive escape from reality.

In his lecture on "Religion, Emotion and Modern Evangelism," Dr. Oglesby compared tranquilizing pills and dependence upon psychiatrists with Norman Vincent Peale and Billy Graham.

"The therapist views with alarm the religious processes of Drs. Peale and Graham," Dr. Oglesby said. "Pointing out that they tend to promote a denial to awareness of reality, a repression of conflict sure to emerge or erupt in violence.

"But there is a startling counter-part in Psychotherapy."

Dr. Oglesby went on to describe how there is "too much quietness," due to tranquilizers, when he walks through a mental hospital. He said that acutely disturbed patients have given doctors less concern than patients "who sit in apathy." He also deplored the tendency of psychotherapists to let their patients lean too heavily on them.

One of the criticisms of the "religious revival," he said, "is that religion tends to dehumanize men, to take away his basic integrity by admonishing him to turn his life over to God, to 'become dependent.' It is 'disquieting,' he pointed out, to find psychotherapists assuming the position of God to their patients.

He appealed to both theologians and psychotherapists to look upon man not as a being with a soul alone, to be treated by a theologian, or as a seat of emotion, to be attended by a psychotherapist, but as a "whole man."

—The Churchman



Herr and Frau Karl Küster of Bremen, West Germany. Herr Küster is the genial editor of the free-thought periodical "Der Funke" ("The Spark—or—Flash").



Prof. Andrea Finochiaro - Aprile, President, Associazione Nazionale Del Libero Pensiero (National Ass'n of Freethinkers) Rome, Italy.

Manis" was part of the intellectual enthusiasm of cultured Italians. Bruno began to be a symbol to represent the forward-looking free-thinking type of philosopher and scientist, and has become a symbol of scientific martyrdom. Bruno was a truant, a philosophical tramp, a poetic vagrant, but has no claims to the name of scientist. His works are not found in American libraries. In this age of biographical writing it is surprising that no modern author has attempted to reconstruct his life, important because it is in the direct line of modern progress. Bruno was a pioneer who roused Europe from its long intellectual sleep. He was martyred for his enthusiasm.

Bruno was born five years after Copernicus died. He had bequeathed an intoxicating idea to the generation that was to follow him. We hear a lot in our own day about the expanding universe. We have learned to accept it as something big. The thought of the Infinity of the Universe was one of the great stimulating ideas of the Renaissance. It was no longer a 15th Century God's backyard. And it suddenly became too vast to be ruled over by a 15th Century God. Bruno tried to imagine a god whose majesty should dignify the majesty of the stars. He devised no new metaphysical quibble nor sectarian schism. He was not playing politics. He was fond of feeling deep thrills over high visions and he liked to talk about his experiences. And all of this refinement went through the refiners' fire—that the world might be made safe from the despotism of the ecclesiastic 16th Century Savage. He suffered a cruel death and achieved a unique martyr's fame. He has become the Church's most difficult alibi. She can explain away the case of Galileo with suave condenscension. Bruno sticks in her throat.

He is one martyr whose name should lead all the rest. He was not a mere religious sectarian who was caught up in the psychology of some mob hysteria. He was a sensitive, imaginative poet, fired with the enthusiasm of a larger vision of a larger universe . . . and he fell into the error of heretical belief. For this poet's vision he was kept in a dark dungeon for eight years and then taken out to a blazing market place and roasted to death by fire.

It is an incredible story.

And the Church will never outlive him.

Dr. John J. Kessler is Editor of SEMANTIKA, a journal for semantists, a member of the board of the American Humanist Association, leader of the Humanist Center of St. Louis, former chemical engineer, a civic leader in his community.



## THE WIDE, WIDE MOVEMENT

*All organizations are urged to send in their news, programs, activities, elections, socials, past or future, and pictures of meetings, officers or members, or anything of interest to Rationalists.*

Most Rationalist organizations do not hold meetings during the summer months but activity still goes on. A Czech Rationalist picnic was held on July fourth for all Chicago Rationalists with music, dancing and refreshments. Earlier the PIONEERS OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT held a meeting in Chicago on the subject **What is Wrong with the Rationalist Movement?** The Czech Rationalist Broadcast continues in Chicago every Sunday 6:30 to 7:30 P.M. over Station WTAQ. Joseph Lacina and Libby Konvalinka are doing very commendable work every week.

The New York Chapter of the RATIONALIST PRESS ASS'N. completed its first year realizing the struggle is a hard one. But they won a crucial battle due to the support, they say, of the parent body in London, the cooperation of the American Rationalist magazine and active local members plus the few newspapers that gave notices, such as the New York Times. Membership cards are now serving as library cards after opening of a lending library for members. On June 27th they held an Open House Party inaugurating a new series of meetings at which recordings of poetry readings and of famous plays and music will be presented. They were able to secure speakers of a calibre consistent with the high standards established by the RPA more than a half century ago. They are in a better position to face a renewed struggle for another year.

RICHMOND SECULAR CLUB met June 7 at 1818 Williamsburg Road. Miss Elizabeth Lansing, of Duke University, Durham, N. C., gave a scholarly talk, **"A Rationalist View of Family Planning."** A lively question-and-answer period followed. Our next meeting will be in September. Contact Dewey Collett, Sec'y, 1415 Chamberlayne Avenue, Richmond 22, Va., for details.

The RATIONALIST SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS held two social programs at members homes with barbeque and plenty of food and drink. James Kaigler showed his ability at playing croquet by winning over much younger players. — Martin Lechner, member of the Rationalist Society of St. Louis, will attend the World Union of Freethinkers meeting in Brussels and will visit with Rationalists in London.

A new magazine has appeared called **The Realist** and is published by The Independent magazine and others under the editorship of Paul Krassner. Somewhat in the style of The Independent, it has a humorous tone throughout its 32 pages. Across the front cover it claims "social-political-religious criticism and satire." With an "egghead" character on the cover, it is an "angry young magazine," and covers a lot of ground. For a sample copy write to The Realist Association, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.

The NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY of England held its 83rd annual conference in Nottingham with a good attendance. Mr. Ridley was re-elected president of the NSS. The motion to approve action of the Executive Committee in associating the NSS with the campaign for nuclear disarmament was passed. A decision was made to investigate activities of Catholic Action in public bodies and preferential treatment given by the taxing authority to religious properties. There was a discussion on a need for a traveling propagandist. The Conference viewed with alarm the racial policy of the Government of South Africa, particularly mass trials of those working for the advancement of African peoples. The traditional Outdoor Demonstrations were held in Old Market Square after the conference with two platforms set up. Some of the most experienced speakers in the country completely nonplussed the audience by a cascade of freethought lectures under the chairmanship of Kingston President J. W. Barker. About fourteen speakers, including Dave Shipper, took the platforms. Later a tour of Nottingham Castle, caves and museum was conducted by local President Arthur Johnson and his wife. The next Annual Conference will be held in Bristol for the first time since 1895. The American Rationalist magazine is displayed in the shop window of the Leicester Secular Hall.

The Wales & Western branch of the National Secular Society combined with the Cardiff Humanist Group for their second annual outing and later visited the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans. They heard Mr. Emrys Roberts of the Plaid Cymru (Welsh Nationalist Party) on **The Necessity for Welsh Nationalism**. Just as there is an Irish Nationalist Movement there is also Welsh and Scottish Nationalist parties. The **Welsh Nation** is published under the title **Y Ddraig Goch** (The Red Dragon) from 8 Queen St., Cardiff, Wales.

Bertrand Russell is president of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The British have become aware of the problem and Christians and atheists are working together on it. In one meeting alone 5,000 came to hear speeches by eminent people such as Lord Simon and Sir Stephen King. Christians of all denominations joined in, except for the Roman Catholics who preferred to



hold their own "anti-bomb" meetings and will not cooperate with others for the same goals.

Mr. F. J. Corina spoke before the Manchester Branch of the N.S.S. on the subject **Heaven and Space Ships**, saying that the age of ballistic missiles has gone beyond the stage of politics and religion and Freethinkers should take stock of their position for aiding the survival of the species against nuclear disaster.

Mr. B. M. Hirson spoke before the RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF JOHANNESBURG on the subject **Why Did Christianity Survive?** Mrs. Betty Luris talked on **An Atheist Mother** and a young and enthusiastic Rationalist James J. Ravell made his debut as a lecturer speaking on **A Rationalist Looks at Religion**. Mr. J. Brummer of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints spoke on **The Logical Basis of Mormonism**. He told the Rationalists that in the Mormon heaven there is marrying and begetting of children. This would, of course, solve the problem of nuclear destruction of the earth, we suppose, because souls would be in production in heaven as well as on earth. But in the Mormon heaven a mere mortal can achieve godlike status because after he produces his progeny he may create a new world of his own and populate it. Students of the Debating Society of the University of Witwatersrand challenged two ministers and a rabbi on the subject that man creates God and that God does not exist independently, that having created God, man bestows upon him those properties which he himself values. The students won by a two-thirds majority.

Freethinkers of LA LIBRE PENSEE DE ST. GILLES celebrated their 50th anniversary with a big meeting and demonstration. The Belgian monthly **De Vrijdenker** commented at some length on Lowell H. Coate's article in the March issue of *The American Rationalist*.

The French Freethought-libertarian journal **Défense De L'Homme** carried an article by Dave Shipper and digested an American Rationalist article by Ira D. Cardiff. Also reprinted was Shipper's **British Sabbath** article from AR. Subscription to French reading Rationalists is 800 Francs a year from M. Louis Dorlet, 27, Rue Jean-Jaurès, Cannes (A.-M.), France.

Swiss Freethinkers in Berne had a lecture on **Bridges Between Man and Animal** from Dr. Hans Sutermeister. The Zurich group heard Dr. Hans Titze lecture on **Our Aim—The Truth**. Fritz Platten spoke on **The Bible as a History Book**.

The Indian Rationalists Association held their 6th annual convention in Madras.

The fact the Soviet Government will not permit the Russian people to vote on the blessings of Communism shows the doubts it has about the results of such a referendum.

## CONNECTICUT JUSTICE?

by Frank Swancara

Jefferson's influence in the matter of separation of the state from religion did not go beyond Virginia and Kentucky. Certainly it never reached Connecticut. There fear of hell by all concerned was, as in England in the time of James I, one of the prerequisites for obtaining justice. No one could testify in court unless he had, actually or presumptively, that fear. The bench and the bar referred to it as "belief in a future state of rewards and punishments."

In 1809 the will of Noah Norton was denied probate because, when the proponent called his attesting witness, the contestor advised the court that he had persons who would prove that the proponent's proposed witness "did not believe in a future state of rewards and punishments." Such persons were thereupon permitted to so testify. The proponent's proposed witness was barred. This will, therefore, could not be proved. It was, in effect, nullified on the ground that the attesting witness was incompetent to testify that he had signed the will in presence of the testator at the time of its execution.

The result was strange enough, but another and incidental court ruling was stranger still, as if proving that truth is stranger than fiction. The court held that the proponent's intended witness could not be permitted to deny what the objector's witnesses said about him, notwithstanding he was the only person who fully knew what his religious fears, if any, were. The court held that if he had no fear of hell he could not safely be believed on anything, including his belief. The judge said: "It would seem to be incongruous to admit a man to his oath for the purpose of learning from him whether he had necessary qualifications to be sworn."

In 1828 the Connecticut judges were still hell-bent. In that year a question arose whether or not it would be sufficient, to qualify a witness, that he merely believe in a Supreme Being and in Divine punishments in this life. Eight years earlier the highest court of New York held that this was not enough, and that there must be belief in punishments "in the world to come." That was in accordance with the remarks once made by the famous or infamous Judge Jeffreys who warned a witness of the danger that "God of Heaven may justly strike thee into eternal flames and make thee drop into the bottomless lake of fire and brimstone."

The Connecticut court followed the opinion of that of New York. In the latter state that kind of law or holding came to embarrass the courts when confronted by, or confronting Universalists. These people were finally admitted on the theory that the Universalist doctrine of universal salva-

tion implied that it was believed that some, although not eternal punishment would be suffered "after this life."

A nonbelief in a personal God would disqualify a witness ipso facto because it implied divine punishments either here or hereafter. It was not Connecticut, however, but the Supreme Court of Illinois, that gave Col. Robert G. Ingersoll the opportunity to make the following comment:

"The Supreme Court decided that an unbeliever in the existence of an Intelligent First Cause could not be allowed to testify in any court. His wife and children might have been murdered before his very face, and yet in the absence of other witnesses, the murderer could not have even been indicted. Justice was not only blind, but deaf."

A rapist could not be convicted if the persecutrix was a nonbeliever in hell, though she may have professed belief in all other fundamentals of Christian creeds. So much injustice could result from the disqualification of non-religious witnesses that finally editors of legal periodicals accepted for publication articles on that subject, and manuscripts were prepared with the aid of the text and notes in the late Dean Wigmore's work on Evidence.

After the War between the States and while the nation was free from threats of war and from religious awakenings, legal reforms were made in many ways, including removal of laws discriminating against non-religious persons. — Some of such reforms took place earlier, but Connecticut was the state where opposition was the loudest. There influential editors and lawyers raised an outcry in 1829 when one branch of the legislature passed a bill which abolished hell and made a witness qualified if he simply believed "in the existence of God and of a superintending Providence." A burning editorial in the September 1829 issue of "Quarterly Christian Spectator" assailed the bill on the ground, among others, that "this God may be anything," and that the "Providence" phrase is too vague as a perjury preventive. No one dared, openly, to make "propaganda" in aid of the proposed reform; it would have been regarded as a subversive and unconnectican activity against "religion" and the state. A 100% Connectican probably read Wigglesworth poem 'The Day of Doom,' on the inmates of hell. It was easy to memorize the lines:

For day and night, in their despite,  
Their torment's smoke ascendeth,  
Their pain and grief have no relief;  
Their anguish never endeth.

A man, like an automobile, isn't delivering full power when he is knocking.

## Excerpts from "MAGNA CHARTA AND THE POPE"

By A. L. BYRON-CURTISS

I happened to read awhile ago in "The New York Times" an account of a special mass that had been celebrated in St. Patrick's Cathedral for the Roman Catholic lawyers in the Metropolitan area. In the report of the sermon preached by the Rev. Joseph M. Tinnelly, dean of the Law School of the Roman Catholic University of St. John's, Brooklyn, he was quoted as having said: "The Magna Charta sprang from the bosom of our holy mother, the Catholic church."

When I read that, I thought it sounded "fishy." So I began to re-read the history of the Magna Charta period. The following is a brief resume of the whole matter.

We are all keenly aware of how the barons of England, with the moral support of two archbishops and a sturdy group of the diocesan bishops, wangled the charter from King John. It all makes fascinating reading today. The King was a wily politician as well as an autocratic humbug, so prevalent in those days.

The fact was that King John crowded the pope for top place in this disgraceful contest. Yet the pope worsted the King in the crude noisome business. The King was heavily in debt by reason of his reckless living and wild plans for power. To get money he had conceded the whole realm of Great Britain to the pope as a suzerainty that he might carry on his war with France. He thus became the pope's vassal, all of which accelerated the pace toward which papal office was gravitating as a civil power. It appeared the pope would attain to dizzy heights as the chief bishop of all the bishops and a civil power to boot.

With such a vacillating King as John the barons of England were losing much of their own power. Hence the famous meeting that was called for at Runnymede. The influ-

ential presence of the archbishops of Canterbury and Dublin and the bishops of all the important sees in England added weight to the charter when it was finally signed and sealed in 1211.

The pope had his representative at the meeting in the person of Pandulfo, as crafty an Italian politician as the pope's court afforded. But he was able to accomplish practically nothing, so roused were the barons against the encroachments of the pope against their liberties, both civil and ecclesiastical. The famous clause in the charter we delight in quoting—"The Church of England shall be free"—is readily understood when we know that the pope had been taking upon himself the appointing of the bishops of the Church of England himself. Less than three centuries later the realm of Great Britain cast out the pope forever.

The old document as we read it today indicates that practically nothing of vital importance to the well being of the English people was overlooked or omitted. Some of the items may seem trivial. But they were by no means trivial when the barons and bishops patiently particularized them on the occasion of setting something to rights that bore directly on the civil, social, judicial and religious well-being of the average citizen of the British Isles.

What of Pope Innocent III during this tremendously epochal making meeting of the barons and bishops at Runnymede that eventuated in trimming the pope's power and which did not cease until the successor in the papal chair was thrust out entirely. The incumbent of the see of Rome knew nothing about it of course until his representative in the person of Pandulof got back to Rome; and it took him three months to get there; afoot, horseback and boat. The Italian politician then told the pope all; lucidly and with all the implications of threatening wreckage to the pope's ambition to be both a civil as well as an ecclesiastical ruler of all Europe. The Charta, if allowed to stand, would be revolutionary in its effects and the beginning of the end of the pope's undisputed power in Europe.

Pope Innocent III proceeded to act without delay. He issued a bull declaring the Magna Charta to be null and void. "We no longer can pass over this audacious wickedness in contempt of the holy see, in infringement of the rights of the King . . . We altogether quash the charter and pronounce it, with all its obligations and guarantees, to be null and void."

At the same time the pope issued another bull ordering the barons to lay down their arms under pain of excommunication. Both documents of this pretended annulment and threat of excommunication are dated August 24, 1215. Practically all standard histories give account concerning the granting of the charter and the papal controversy about it, as I have epitomized above. (The work I quote from briefly is "The Conquerors," by Thomas B. Costain; Doubleday, page 333.)

The fact of the pope's pretending to nullify the Magna Charta leaves the Rev. Joseph M. Tinnelly, dean of the Law School of the Roman Catholic University of St. John's, Brooklyn, dangling from one of two dilemmas. If he did not know that the pope had repudiated the Magna Charta without qualification, which is a matter of record, then he is an ignorant man unfit to hold a position in any college or university. And if he was aware the pope had condemned the charter when he declared so glibly in the pulpit of St. Patrick's Cathedral that "The Magna Charta sprang from the bosom of our Holy Mother the Catholic Church," then he was guilty of perverting the truth and his course is a duplication of the Jesuitical course—that the end justifies the means, which is condemned by all honest men.

—The Churchman

The National Education Association, 1201 16th St. NW, Washington 6, D. C., published in December 1956 a Research Bulletin on "The State and Sectarian Education." It is a masterful presentation of the problem and well worth the 50¢ it costs. Write for a copy.

The prime purpose of eloquence seems to be to keep other people from talking.

## Freethought In Italy

by DAVE SHIPPER

The Italian Associazione Lazionale del Libero Pensiero (National Association of Freethinkers), popularly known as the "Giordano Bruno" Association, is an extremely busy society whose operations (directed from Rome H.Q.—almost in the shadow of the Vatican) take place throughout Italy and the Islands. Its numerous branches are very helpful in advising and instituting regional propaganda programs.

With the growth of Roman Catholic power and the constant inroads into secular life being made by the church, the "Giordano Bruno" is assuming an increasingly important role in Italian life and their commitments are becoming greater.

Although they recently suffered a misfortune with the death of their energetic secretary Carlo Silvestri, they are fortunate in possessing one of the outstanding leaders of European freethought in their President, Professor Andrea Finocchiaro-Aprile, jurist, historian (he taught History of Law in the universities of Ferrara, Siena and Bologna) and philosopher of repute, who has gathered about him a group of convinced freethinkers, individuals dedicated to the propagation of freethought and certain of the necessity of the independence of the State from the Church.

Affirming that adherents of ALL religions—and non-religionists too—should possess equal freedom (which they will respect), they are engaged in a continual struggle to limit Vatican power to the "spiritual" field—the only field in which they have any right—and point out that other religions refrain from interference in political matters and do not attempt to influence the government.

The various branches hold regular meetings and these are always well attended (particularly those in Rome), lectures being devoted to the defense and propagation of freethought and critical analyses of religion (the R. C. Church naturally receives particular attention). These lectures are follow-

ed by eagerly-awaited question periods and animated discussion.

The Association's journal (nominally a monthly) is "La Ragione" ("The Reason"), a polemical paper with a high intellectual standard which contains articles dealing with political, social, religious and philosophical problems. Many eminent writers contribute to "La Ragione," which is capably managed by Professor Finocchiaro-Aprile, who is himself a regular contributor.

The Italian movement is fortunate in possessing such a strong personality at the helm and Prof. Finocchiaro-Aprile, a high-ranking Mason, has been many times a member of Parliament, led the Sicilian Independence Movement at the end of World War II, is a lawyer to the Supreme Court, a judge for the Sicilian High Court, is Chairman of the Italian League for Human Rights (Lega Internazionale Diritti Dell' Uomo—an affiliate of the International League for the Rights of Man), and well-known as a speaker and writer.

Even if unknown otherwise he would be famous for his attack on De Gasperi & Co., made in the Constituent Assembly in 1947, when, with the eloquence of a practised orator, he condemned De Gasperi and the Christian Democrats for permitting and collaborating in clerical domination.

With such capable leadership and strong support the "Giordano Bruno" should continue to flourish as fearless opponents of the Vatican and important members of the World Union of Freethinkers.

I would like to conclude by thanking our Italian friends for their friendly co-operation in furnishing this material and sending fraternal greetings on behalf of "A.R." and all American rationalists.

Note: — Readers understanding Italian might like to write for samples of "La Ragione." Inquiries should be made to: Associazione Nazionale del Libero Pensiero, "Giordano Bruno", Via Angelo Brunetti 62, Roma, Italia.

It is not hard to find the truth; what is hard is not to run away from it once you have found it.

## DO-IT-YOURSELF FREETHOUGHT

By RALPH S. BLOIS

Prophecies and predictions of future events are nothing new. We have had seers and fortune tellers for ages. Most of these glimpses into the future have been shrouded in obscure language not possible to interpret until after the predicted event had occurred. This is trickery.

There is another type of future telling. It is the scientific method of determining the next most probable. A series of tests (on anything imaginable) are made and the results noted. Assuming that conditions will remain the same, the results of the next test then can be predicted.

A prediction of our future must be based on an analysis of our present situation. See what trends are developing and extend these into the future. The following is what could happen if something isn't done to prevent it.

Religious influence is increasing. In God We Trust appears on our coins, bills and stamps. Under God is now in the Oath of Allegiance. Church membership is at an all time high. The trend is increasing. In 1800, church membership was only 5% of the nations population, in 1835 it was 14%, rising to 20% by 1880, 35% by 1900, 40% by 1920, 49% by 1940, 56% by 1951 and 60% is claimed today. If this rate continues it will be 100% by the 21st century. Roman Catholics have infiltrated high government positions and for the first time in our history we shortly may elect a Catholic President. Evolution is banned in many places and God is in the universities. Should we have a Catholic President, Free-thought could be outlawed and America made a Christian nation. What are you doing to stop this trend? Don't let the other guy do it—he just left it up to you.

The hate groups are hard at work and reaching fantastic heights. Hate the Jews, hate the Negroes, hate Atheists, hate Catholics. Hate Russia is almost an essential part of every true blooded American—any sane talk on Russia and you are automatically branded a communist. I predict that this will increase. In an effort to protect our defenses (?) we will commit some act for which Russia will protest in the U.N., but will be outvoted. This time Russia will walk out of the U.N. and, with Britain as our base, we will have the most spectacular war you have ever seen.

Negro persecution abounds. We are two nations, a white group which watches TV, reads Life and Readers Digest, and a dark group which reads Ebony and sings jazz. If the Negro nation produced a leader, our history would take a new turn. By revolt or election the Negro could become stronger than present white supremacy.

I have shown some possible happenings based

on present conditions extended into the future. None of these may happen. The present situation is serious, including the recession or depression. This is pessimistic. Is there nothing on the side of optimism? Yes there is. You and I are part of it.

Science and knowledge could be our salvation. Sputnik created a new interest in science. Incidents like that will turn the course of history. Almost overnight the tide of anti-science began to turn. These happenings cannot be predicted, yet they could prevent my predictions from coming true. "The shot heard around the world," started the American Revolution. One, man, Louis Pasteur, advanced his germ theory and revolutionized medicine. History books reveal hundreds of examples of incidents created by a handful of people. We could create such incidents and turn the tide of religiosity.

As long as we bicker and fight among ourselves we are impotent. We could become a force

### Let's Face It!

To live successfully, to gain full satisfaction from living in a world filled with the most remarkable technical and scientific riches and opportunities, yet, in an atmosphere of strife and confusion. . . To discover, explore, and develop our life in a distinctly individual way. . . To actively participate in the up-building of the ailing world . . . each of us must have much more than the ordinary "3 R's," a well-paying job, trade, or profession. Aside from mother skills, we must become clear thinkers, develop an all-round purposeful awareness to all things, acquire keenly discerning eye, creative resourcefulness of hands, of logic, and insight into the ways of Nature and life.

Through the use of such personal tools we can readily recognize and put to good use all things, facts and opportunities; break through the maze of confusions and traditional dogma, improve upon every aspect of living and enjoy delightful independence. Thus we will enrich, add significance and dignity to our lives . . . prepare for leadership.

Logically, no one is going to hand us these skills, we have to develop them. Let us start now! . . . let us improve upon our proficiency in living, and create a living world of our own.

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of considerable importance. There are two ways. We can become a powerful minority by having members in key positions like the Catholics, or we can become an influential majority. It will take time, but, if we cooperate and have a definite plan of action, we can do it. Or will you admit that Catholicism is superior to Free-thought?

Last year there was a minor skirmish in Chicago and we lost it through default—no players. One of the TV stations planned on showing the film, "Martin Luther." Catholic pressure prevented the film being shown. This was public knowledge. Not so widely known is the station manager's admission that if he had received as few as 35 requests in favor of the film—it would have been shown. How many other battles have we lost through default? We need a "Freethought Action" group, to plan a course of aggressive action. Part of this action will involve letter writing. Letters to newspapers, government officials, and organizations will put across the freethought viewpoint. Letter writing is relatively inexpensive yet effective. One letter to a newspaper proves we are a minority. Fifty letters prove that we are a group worth considering.

Someone should coordinate these letters for best effect. Someone? Who? In freethought everyone passes the buck and nothing gets done. O.K. I'll do it. Any of you who want to help please write to RALPH S. BLOIS, 2208 Overdene Ave., Rockford, Ill. Remember, the other guy isn't going to do it—you have to. The procedure will be simple. Each person will receive a bulletin outlining the letters to be written, it is then up to the individual. Any one who has a suggestion for a letter, or subject, or person to be written to, will send in the suggestion and a campaign will be worked out. There will be no dues. Just send two stamped self-addressed envelopes to me each month so you can receive letter campaign notices.

This is a start. Do you have an idea, or method for improving and promoting freethought? Then you take the ball and do something about it—nobody else will—you have to.

## TWO FOOLS

by Charles Podsen

The fool hath said "There is no God"  
Another says: "There be"—  
As if in truth each fool had known  
A god's 'infinity.

The fool hath said "There is no God"  
Another says: "There be"—  
So take your choice of foolishness  
Or let the matter be.

## Religion's Dangerous Popularity

### A Possible Road to Bitter Disillusionment

I am disturbed by much of the popularity of religion today. It can be one of the most dangerous elements in our midst. There are people today who think that by the proper use of certain words, forms, and rituals, they can cajole or flatter God into the position of a divine lackey who is going to grant them special favors, give the players on their team special dispensations, and be at their beck and call whenever they may so desire.

This is a counterfeit type of religion which will inevitably leave disillusionment in its wake when it passes—and it must surely pass.

We Americans are experiencing a very weird phenomenon in our American life. We have what we call more religion but on every side less morality. Churches are showing an increased enrollment but the moral levels of our society are skidding down grade. Religion gains ground, morality loses ground. This is the paradox in our social order today.

Church membership is increasing at a fantastic rate of speed, the fastest, in fact, in our history; attendance is up in almost every church in the nation; the sale of religious books exceeds anything that has been known heretofore in the history of the publication of religious books; young people on the college campuses are expressing more interest in religion than has been evident in many a year. All sorts of political meetings open with prayer; congressmen have "Bible breakfasts"; on every side organizations crusade — Back to God! — Back to the Bible! School days open with prayers and scripture readings and senators are trying to put Jesus Christ into the Constitution. The singers of popular songs entreat us ad nauseum to "cry in the chapel" — "count our blessings" — or talk it over with "the man upstairs."

And yet alcoholism is increasing. Families are breaking up. Gambling is at an all time high. Juvenile delinquency (more properly called parental delinquency) about which we hear so much is getting constantly worse.

Fear is running rampant. We are so afraid of each other, afraid of free speech, afraid of the Russians, afraid of free thoughts, afraid of books, of teachers, of thinkers, of intellectuals, of scientists. We are afraid that someone might have an idea. We are afraid of the satellites zooming over our heads every hour and thirty minutes.

And all this at a time when real religion is supposed to be at such a high pitch. It is para-

doxical. It is almost unbelievable. That is why I say that there is grave danger in today's popularity of religion.

This is our problem. Unless religion is primarily committed to the enrichment of man's moral experience, unless it has to do with his daily life and the way he lives that daily life, it easily becomes spiritual hocus pocus. The immense preoccupation with religion today, its immense popularity, is making it become a sort of fad without meaning, value, or worth, and it is time we did something constructive about it.

But what?

That is the question which we of the churches ought to be answering. We ought to do something about it.

About 4000 years ago someone asked Wang-Wei, a famous Chinese poet, what is the supreme happiness here on earth. His answer was significant, for in homely metaphor he answered, "It is in listening to the song of a little girl as she goes down the road after having asked the way."

It is quite evident that the poet's happiness came from the knowledge that a little girl who had lost her way had been helped to recover her direction. In effect, the poet was saying that it is important to know where you are and where you are going. That is what we today want to know. It is evident where we are but not quite so plain just where we are going.

Historically every civilization has had some group or institution whose purpose was to define the important objectives of that civilization and

to lay out the itinerary which would reach them. That, as I understand it, is the reason for the existence of the church.

I grant you that the church has many other duties and functions, nevertheless the liberal church stands committed to this essential task. Now, more than ever, we are aware that the importance and the justification for our existence is in the degree to which we can supply direction to those asking the way.

## The Catholic Church Has Infallibility!

### MEMORANDUM—

One of the most astounding claims in the whole world is the claim to Infallibility! So unusual and staggering are the implications of this teaching that only One Institution in the history of the world has ever claimed and sustained this doctrine. No Government ever claimed it, Science does not boast of it, Economics does not possess it—only the Catholic Church among all the Institutions of the world has ever claimed and sustained in her history the aura of Infallibility.

What does Infallibility mean? It means that the Church cannot be mistaken about any of the truths revealed by God in matters of faith and morals! Is there Scriptural basis for this teaching? Do the pages of history confirm or reject this teaching? You can learn the basis and advantages of Infallibility by enrolling in the Free Home Study Course on the Catholic Religion. Send for this Course today! Learn the Scriptural and Traditional basis for this astounding teaching of the Catholic Church. Learn why the Catholic Church, in a world adrift from its moorings, is so positive about her teachings. Learn how comforting the teaching on Infallibility is!

ITALY—For having sold the famous book by Roger Peyrefitte, "The Keys of St. Peter," ten Roman booksellers received summonses from the Criminal Police, charged with: (a) Sale of a book making ridiculous the person of the Holy Father; (b) Making fun of the State Religion of Italy; and (c) Distribution of obscene literature. The Freethinker (London)

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## WHAT CAN WE DO?

By EDD DOERR

When two or more humanists, freethinkers or rationalists get together, they frequently bemoan the lack of success of their respective organizations and ask such questions as "What can we do?" Questions such as this have long concerned this writer and it is his firm opinion that there is a great deal that can be done. If humanists, freethinkers and rationalists would show anything resembling the zeal and vigor of crusaders, whether religious or otherwise, a surprising amount of progress would be made by humanism and related schools of thought. The following list of suggestions as to "what we can do" may be rather incomplete, but it might serve to stimulate a little constructive thinking among members of humanist and other similar groups who have run short of ideas as to how to increase their effectiveness.

1.) Many who are not engaged in work of an academic nature have "fallen behind" educationally and could stand to improve themselves, and thus their effectiveness, through further formal education. This can be done by enrolling in evening classes which are offered in nearly every city by a large number of universities. For those for whom this idea holds little appeal there are correspondence courses for full college credit offered through a number of universities. The Home Study Department of the University of Chicago, for example, offers numerous courses dealing with the social sciences, semantics, communication theory, world affairs, etc.

2.) The humanist viewpoint can be effectively promoted by seeing that local and university libraries have a stock of books and periodicals dealing with subjects of interest to humanists and rationalists and secularists. If the libraries will not purchase the recommended books, they will generally accept donations.

3.) Bookstores and magazine stands will carry humanist and rationalist periodicals and books if it is known that a demand exists for them.

4.) Organizations which are doing work that is of value to the humanist and rationalist movements should be supported in various ways by every humanist and rationalist. Such organizations would include the American Civil Liberties Union, POAU (Protestants and Others United for Separation of Church and State), the planned Parenthood Federation, the International Society for General Semantics, etc. Money is also needed for Indiana University's (Kinsey's) Institute for Sex Research (which the foundations have refused to support for fear of adverse publicity) and groups which are do-

## LORD RUSSELL'S TRIAL

Brand Blanshard in his appreciative review of Lord Russell's "Why I Am Not a Christian" (SR Oct. 5) quite appropriately refers to the shameful episode of Russell's exclusion from the faculty of the College of the City of New York. But his statement that Judge McGeehan, "tried the suit and duly pronounced Russell unfit to teach" gives an entirely false impression of what actually happened. The suit was never tried, and although the judge did pronounce Russell unfit there was nothing "duly" about the way this was accomplished.

The taxpayer-parent who brought the suit challenged the right of the Board of Higher Education to employ Russell on a number of grounds: that he was an alien, that he had not been selected by competitive examination, and that he was morally unsuitable. The Board, acting through its city appointed lawyer, the Corporation Counsel, challenged the right of this taxpayer-parent to bring the proceeding and the validity of the grounds alleged. Normally the judge before whom such a challenge is argued does no more than determine whether, on the facts stated, a claim for relief has been made out. If he decides this in the affirmative then the party against whom the proceeding is instituted in this instance the Board of Higher Education, is given the opportunity of disputing the facts by a answer. Only then could there be any trial with the taking of testimony, any decision having the effect, as here, of banning Russell.

But in this case Judge McGeehan not only decided, that a sufficient claim had been asserted, but took it on himself to deprive the Board of all opportunity to dispute the facts. So he made a final decision on the merits as though there had, in fact, been a trial. This was all the more shocking because Russell was not represented and, after the axe had

fallen, was denied the right to contest the result.

There is one other aspect of this matter that needs to be recalled—the role played by Mayor LaGuardia. For he instructed his appointee, the Corporation Counsel, not to appeal the decision. And when the Board tried to appeal through independent counsel the courts ruled that it had no right to do so. One of the lawyers who acted for the Board (without fee) now sits on the United States Supreme Court—John M. Harlan.

It should also be noted that no one has ever paid attention to Judge McGeehan's ruling that the professors at the City College must be appointed by competitive examination.

Osmond K. Fraenkel,  
New York, N. Y.

#### Where is Tyranny?

The Watchman-Examiner — a Baptist weekly edited in New York by Dr. John W. Bradbury, in a recent editorial on "Religious Tyranny" commented:

"In what nations of the world is there religious tyranny? And in what other nations is there religious freedom? These are legitimate questions. With world-wide news at our disposal it is not difficult to give the answer. Where Protestants are most numerous you will find greater freedom to the point of complete liberty. Where the Roman Catholic Church dominates you will find less freedom to the point of religious oppression and tyranny."

The Churchman.

As a Freethinker of nearly 60 years standing allow me to express my deep appreciation of your paper. It helps to dispel my misgivings about certain tendencies in your great country—tendencies all too well advertised abroad. It is reassuring to know that there are so many enthusiastic groups of Americans struggling to uphold the principles of the Founding Fathers. May you prosper and increase!

Eric A. McDonald,  
Johannesburg, S. Africa.

ing valuable, but unpopular, research on such items as oral contraceptives.

5.) Letters to the editors of newspapers, magazines and professional journals are another valuable way of spreading humanist and secularist ideas. Letters may be short or long, depending upon the nature of the topic and the publication, and need not be gems of literary eloquence. The present writer, for example, has had nearly two hundred letters published in such diverse publications as local newspapers, science fiction magazines, Time, Newsweek and Look. That "letters to the editor" are effective is made clear by the fact that the Christopher Movement (Roman Catholic action group) places strong emphasis upon their importance. Letters may be written to clarify an obscure matter which was poorly reported, to commend a public official for defending the secularism of public institutions, to protest against activities which threaten religious freedom, or to discuss the significance of some event or another. In Time and Newsweek magazines, which reported the conviction for defamation of Bishop Fiordelli in Prato, Italy, only four "letters" were published concerning the matter and three of them defended the Bishop. More humanists and rationalists should have written to the magazines about this matter. Letters to the editor are an inexpensive and yet effective way of molding public opinion. One need not be a Tom Paine or Alexander Hamilton to write them either.

6.) Liberal churches should be supported and may even be influenced to become more liberal. The Unitarian and Universalist churches and the Ethical Societies are either humanist or nearly so in orientation, and have a great deal of influence and prestige in comparison with the less well organized humanist, freethought and rationalist organizations. Further, the liberal churches are nearly always in a position to provide humanist or liberal religious Sunday School instruction for the children of humanist and rationalist parents, a function which is of the greatest importance in preventing attrition from liberal religious movements.

7.) Even the smallest humanist and rationalist groups can sponsor public lectures, debates and panel discussions. For this purpose, the American Humanist Association maintains an excellent speakers bureau. Further, excellent speakers can usually be obtained from nearby universities. In regard to public lectures, etc., little or no effort should be made to "sell" humanism or rationalism directly. The lecture should be put on as a public service. In recent years, for example, the small humanist group in Indianapolis sponsored lectures by Dr. Julian Huxley, Dr. S. I. Hayakawa, Dr. Ernest Ukpaby and Dr. Zuhdi Faruki, on such diverse subjects as the

implications of evolution, General Semantics, the Mau Mau affair and American foreign policy in the Near East. Other groups in other cities and towns have presented other speakers on a wide variety of topics.

8.) Humanist, freethought and rationalist groups can sponsor study groups (perhaps along Great Books lines), meetings and various other types of activities, all or many of which should be open to the public. Study group classes for college credit may be conducted through the University of Chicago and perhaps through other universities.

9.) Writers, whether of greater or lesser merit, will find the science fiction magazines (there are about twenty currently being published on a monthly or bi-monthly basis) offer an excellent forum for the presentation of humanistic ideas in fictional form. Numerous fan magazines (for science fiction addicts, that is) also offer interesting opportunities. This medium, however, has never been adequately exploited in this direction.

The above list of suggestions is doubtless incomplete, but if it helps in any way to increase our effectiveness, it will have served its purpose. In conclusion, the reader might well be reminded that we, as humanists and rationalists, should take seriously our frequently voiced view that the scientific method is our best tool for understanding and coping with our environment. By this is meant that in attempting to spread our influence and ideas we should base our methods on as thorough as possible a comprehension of the sciences of behavior and communication. Yelling "down with the pope" or "away with the churches" is not a particularly effective way of making friends and influencing people.

In our 2nd Anniversary issue, we stated that, thereafter, we would increase our original 32 pp. to 40 if we received added support from our readers. We have done this because our mail of 2 1/2 years has been so consistent in its enthusiastic commendation that it led us to believe that this would be provided generously.

However, there has been little response and we find the added costs consuming funds required for promotional advertising to increase our circulation.

We do not wish to raise our subscription price. Hence, we urge all those who believe in us and can afford it—many of you can—to contribute to our Promotional Fund. Appeal to Fear enables the Catholics to flood the country with lavish publications. Can an appeal to Reason do less?

Your Editor

## '60 Victory Main Object Of Kennedy

by Edgar M. Mills, New England  
Political Editor of The Christian  
Science Monitor.

Senator John F. Kennedy (D) Massachusetts, is strictly a weekend campaigner, as far as his present on-the-scene reelection campaigning in the Bay State is concerned.

But his every move in Washington, during the congressional session is carefully calculated to add to his reelection stock and to further his drive toward the Democratic presidential nomination in 1960.

His immediate goal is to fashion a tremendous reelection plurality to strengthen his prospects for 1960. With Charles Gibbons of Stoneham, former Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, due to be his Republican opponent in November, Senator Kennedy is being spurred to an all-out effort.

### Big Margin Vital

Against a lesser opponent a big Kennedy margin would mean little. Against Mr. Gibbons a margin of more than 300,000 votes would give Senator Kennedy's presidential vehicle added impetus.

But a margin well below 300,000 votes, or a really close result would tend to water down his presidential attractiveness, it is felt in many quarters.

A defeat, considered by most observers as most unlikely despite Mr. Gibbons' high caliber, would smash any Kennedy presidential ambitions completely.

Publicly, Senator Kennedy is meticulously sticking to reelection as his only goal. But his every move, his frequency as a speaker outside the state, his whole setup shows that the presidency in 1960 is the real goal ahead, with the senatorial campaign being part of the tremendous buildup.

At present, the Bay State junior senator is practically a Washington to Massachusetts weekend commuter, with speaking engagements carefully planned to enable him to return to the capital without missing important Senate roll calls.



## CLERICAL HERESIES

The biological perversity of a Christian community: The Gnostics did not castrate or abstain from intercourse but religiously avoided begetting offspring and practised "self-collection" (i. e. swallowing), collection of **psyche** whenever (male) seed was emitted. This suggests that the chief purpose originally behind the religious practice of self-castration was not, as has been thought, the bestowal of the seed-vessels wholesale upon some deity or the loss of virility or the avoiding of defilement but the positive conservation of the seed, the life-stuff, the soul-stuff, with which **psyche** was particularly identified. (Onions, cp. c., p. 110). — From a biological point of view it is very odd that sexual intercourse, by means of which the race continues, should be such that any book intended to encourage it should be condemned. — W. J. H. Sprott (The Listener, Apr. 12, 1956, p. 413).

Gregory S. Smelters



May I compliment you on your very interesting May issue of the Rationalist.

Yours very truly,

Marshall F. Goodheart,  
Chicago, Ill.

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## WHAT IS IT TO BE A RATIONALIST?

By HARRY E. MONGOLD

A Rationalist is usually defined as one who uses his own observation and reason to shape his concepts, without regard for traditional authority. This definition raises several questions. As stated, does it not allow a Rationalist to hold to a prejudice based on an isolated experience and upon his deductions from it, which later experience should require him to abandon? Does it not allow one to restrict the scope of his knowledge, to be wilfully blind, specifically, to be foolish enough to be a criminal or a neurotic anti-democratic leader? This is a most extreme suggestion, but the definition does not suggest full utilization of knowledge, including trained awareness to one's own best interests.

Rationalism is usually interpreted as referring to religions. Is there not danger that one will replace awe for church authority with a similar unquestioning attitude toward famous thinkers outside the theological field? To find answers to such questions, let us consider what we really are interested in being and teaching.

Of course, Rationalism cannot be merely a belief in reason and observation. All people reason, and they base much of their reasoning on experience. For example, the children who are unable to find consistency in what their teachers and parents require of them may **experience** less trouble when they obey blindly than when they try to understand. They may then **reason** that as many matters should be left to authority as possible. In this way one can even think his way out of some of the responsibility of thinking.

Also, Rationalism is not a rejection of authority. Everyone must rely on scientists for reports on their observations, and on travellers for information about foreign places. A mathematician or biologist will uncover facts by methods that are too much for most of us because of our lack of training. If we can decide which are competent authorities, we can rely on their reports.

The issue seems to be mainly, how far do we wish to support the use of authority? Or, in other words, how far will we insist on our own judgment.

I believe a Rationalist should be one who has rational habits. Since one's knowledge of his world must come thru his senses, and since second and third-hand information which cannot be checked has doubtful validity, I conclude that one should use his own senses less to listen to words and more to observe people and things.

I believe a rational person notices what goes on about him, partly to generalize upon, for his own principles, and partly to compare with what authorities claim to be true. The less one is interested in testing authority, the less rational he is.

I am in the habit of classifying myself as a Rationalist. There is one way in which this is unfortunate. By giving myself a name I am making it easy for me to replace wisdom by the word, forgetting to live up to what the name stands for. For example, I might become like many writers who consider themselves Rationalists but who show by their writings a certain deplorable carelessness. This is the carelessness of accepting authorities instead of testing them, when their own intellectual skills are good enough for testing them. They have somehow acquired such an awe of names like Einstein, Freud, or Keynes that they do not trouble to check carefully what these men reasoned and taught.

How can one keep his thinking from ruts like this? How can one manage to remind himself that even philosophy has fads and cycles to some extent, and that the interpretations made in fields of knowledge such as economics, physics, and biology depend on the scientists' philosophical premises? This seems to be a matter merely of one's own thought habits.

But what authority is as mighty and awesome as one's own self? What has more weight in my thinking of today than my thinking of yesterday? Therefore, in addition to checking on what others have said, one has the constant duty of reviewing his own opinions—including opinions about standard authorities. I think it is practicable to glance critically at one's concepts whenever there arises a thought in connection with them that has not occurred to him before. Whenever there seems something paradoxical about what he has believed or what is said by an authority he has thought the best, he should seek an opportunity to review the reasoning and evidence behind the concept.

A good deal of our trouble is with words. The Christian has catch phrases which are designed to explain everything, striking one dumb and penitent, as "He died for you!" Similarly, intellectuals are likely to collect catch phrases, perhaps "progressive legislation" or "the modern way." I would advise Rationalists to be cautious when they find themselves using these phrases.

However, a truly rational person will surely go much further than this. There are words that most Rationalists have been taught to reject as mythological, such as "god" or "gremlin." Should not even this type of opinion be subject to review in some circumstances? Assuming certain guides for reason, such as that a word

## CHECK and DOUBLE CHECK by 'CHEKA'

### AS THE LEAVES ARE FALLING . . .

September, and before you know it, it will be January. — Autumn days are beautiful, the best time of the year to go out and do a bit for the Rationalist movement; for instance, getting a new subscriber for the American Rationalist. Try it!

Dave Shipper reports that he has 20 replies for the Pen-Pals Club, four from the USA, three from Holland, one from South Africa, six from England, two from Scotland, and one each from West Germany, North Rhodesia, Ceylon, and Wales. Boy, does our magazine get around . . . and we are proud of it, too!

### PLEASE NOTE!

DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY TO OUR PUBLICATION OFFICE IN CHICAGO. SEND IT DIRECT TO THE MAIN OFFICE IN ST. LOUIS, 2218 ST. LOUIS AVE., ST. LOUIS 6, MISSOURI. Your business will be transacted and taken care of in a matter of days instead of weeks. PLEASE SEND ALL YOUR INQUIRIES DIRECT TO ST. LOUIS.

### AN APPEAL FROM OUR EDITOR!

Our editor, Mr. A. B. Hewson, is making an appeal to all readers to pitch in and make the American Rationalist even better. — For several months we have published a magazine of 40 pages or more. The AR office wasn't able to finance this extra cost, so Mr. Hewson advanced a hundred dollars per issue to make the 40 pages possible, hoping that the readers will "carry on" so that we can keep the "40" all the time. Even the price of the subscription wasn't raised as yet. We cannot ask Mr. Hewson to do this indefinitely and I'm raising my voice, hoping that our AR readership will take the hint and pitch in. How about it,

friends, am I right, or am I right?  
A little of that "extra" will sure  
help a lot. Thanks!

#### THE AR IS LOADED . . .

Yes, the American Rationalist is loaded with articles and news. Every issue is better than the last one. After all, we are just fulfilling our pledge to give our readers the best in Rationalist literature.

#### DID YOU GET IT?

Oh, that "Heavenly Humor" . . . what a book! We will not write about it. You must read it to find out for yourself. Be sure to send in your order today. And for a gift suggestion: Heavenly Humor, of course.

#### AS USUAL . . .

The end comes as usual, so, in conclusion, I say again, see you next month! Note how I'm signing off . . . Grandpa Cejka — that's telling the world, hey?

#### CLERICAL HERESIES

Both the communities of primitive savages and the Christian (American) society suppress free independent thinking: Life in society requires consensus as an indispensable condition. But consensus, to be productive, requires that each individual contribute independently out of his experience and insight. When consensus comes under the dominance of conformity, the social process is polluted and the individual at the same time surrenders the powers on which his functioning as a feeling and thinking being depends. That we have found the tendency to conformity in our society so strong that reasonably intelligent and well-meaning young people are willing to call white black is a matter of concern. It raises questions about our ways of education, about the values that guide our conduct. (S. E. Ash, *Opinions and Social Pressure*, in *Scientific American*, Nov. 1955).

Gregory S. Smelters

It is less violence to our nature to defy protoplasm than it is to diabolize the deity.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

must always refer either to some necessarily assumed, physical reality or to something one can sense directly, there is no danger in being completely open-minded.

Some years ago I felt a sort of contempt for any economic theory I could term "laissez-faire." It was inconceivable that I should ever defend the moss-covered doctrine referred to by this word. Then it was called to my attention that the college economics texts that I still felt a respect for (but had not thought much about for years) had given a good deal of support to the free economy. In fact, my prejudice against tariffs originated with these same arguments. If any prejudice as strong as that of mine against "laissez-faire" can prove to conflict with another as strong as mine against tariffs, and if I can hold both of these at the same time, evidently any of my dearest beliefs might turn out to be inconsistent.

Of course, the preference of self-reliance over reliance on authority is defensible by reason and experience. The latter is most easily represented by the history of governments and peoples. However, there is no need to defend the principle, as those who depend unquestioningly on some particular authorities have themselves experienced (heard or read) the reports of these sources. Also they have usually used reason, coupled with unfortunate premises, for their decision to be dependent on authority.

A person's compulsion, often unrecognized by him as such, to believe a certain authority at all costs, forces him to use his reason and observation to that end. He can "close his mind" or reinterpret unpalatable reports from the sciences so that they match what he has been authorized to believe. These are intellectual efforts. By using them, he belies his supposed contempt for his own reasoning ability.

One question remains. Does one in normal speech refer to a "rational" person and mean that he thinks for himself? It is more likely that we refer to his ability to think clearly. If I say John Jones is irrational, I ordinarily mean that he is confused. I mean that his logic is poor and that he does not seem to realize his own conflicting statements and policies.

Psychiatry suggests that a good definition of an irrational person is "one who is unaware of his premises." He is one who does not realize what he is trying to do except in immediate, simple actions. His so-called Unconscious determines much of what he does. The less rational a person is, the less he knows about himself. The "flighty" person, the one who is always "running away from himself," or any other who is "hard to

reach" with an idea is one who has blind spots about his own motives and concepts.

This matter is important to Rationalism. It is the people who are vague about what they want and what they fear who swell church attendance and who commit crimes. It is the people who cannot think clearly who suppose they are supporting democracy when they put stigmas on free thought and individual opinion.

In its broad aspect, this issue includes knowledge in general. The definition of a Rationalist should include his attempt to learn all he can about the human personality, about the people who share the same country or continent or planet. This means a study of social policy. Also, a Rationalist should seek to know something of all the sciences, and to form an all-inclusive philosophy of life. It is not enough that he prefer his own reason to authority, he must provide his reason with all the valid information he has the time and ability to absorb.

I believe that a rational person never gives up his confidence that he can solve any mystery as well as anyone else can, given the information and the time. He insists on deciding for himself how he shall live. However, he also reviews his own opinions often. This he can do because he knows what his real opinions are. In fact, a primary mark of his rationality is that he understands his own postulates and motives relatively well. Furthermore, he learns as much as possible about other people, at least in a general way, because he must live with them, and he will be interested in broad social policy and legislation.

Only insofar as these concepts are included or implied can a definition of Rationalism satisfy me. We need to teach these ideas as our "positive approach." These are the things we take for granted that people know and that we ourselves practice, but actually are rare virtues. If we restrict our movement to only part of this program, saying it is too much to handle and that it gets away from the traditional aims of Rationalism, we will be obstructing what efforts we do make. Only a fully rational people can ever develop the freedom and democracy we fundamentally seek.

As my tentative proposal for a Rationalist motto or statement, I suggest this: The basic wisdom that will never die is self-reliance checked by self-criticism, founded on wide and intelligent observation of self and world.

When an English Quaker married a Unitarian in 1812 he was disowned and readmitted only when he promised not to do it again. Out of courtesy to his wife he refused to repent having married her.

## " QUOTUS

from the Freethought  
publications of the world

from VOICE OF FREEDOM:

Here in the United States we still have to battle for the ground upon which the real advance of progress will have to develop.

from THE LIBERAL:

God was located in thunder until Franklin, in "design" until Darwin, in the "moral sense", then until Nietzsche and Freud.

from THE AGE OF REASON  
MAGAZINE:

Mystics laugh at one another — the servant in India preceding his master, brushing ants from his path so that he may not step on one of his ancestors, is considered funny by the owner of an Ouija board who won't walk under a step-ladder.

from THE NEW ZEALAND  
RATIONALIST:

It is commonly accepted, just why I don't know, in view of the evidence, that we, in Australia and New Zealand, are living in a Christian community; if this were once true, it has long ceased to be. Of the non-Catholic sects, only about 15 percent regularly attend church; all these people do is to obey the tabu imperatives of being baptised, married and buried by the church rituals; all derived, by the way, from primitive folk-lore. Of Catholics about 60 percent attend church.

from THE RATIONALIST  
(Johannesburg):

At a famous boarding school in South Africa, the headmistress recently forbade the wearing of all lucky mascots by children writing school examinations, a very popular custom. The children now have taken to wearing crosses on these occasions. These seem to be the next best thing. The headmistress has preserved silence.

## The "McCarthyism" of Vanini's Inquisitors

(A. D. 1618)

by Frank Swancara

From the brittle and crumbling pages of a book published in 1893, John Owen, "The Skeptics of the Italian Renaissance," one may learn of the charges against, and trial of, Ciulio Cesare Vanini (1585-1619). The chief witness was Sieur de Francon, later extolled by the Catholic historian, Graymond, as "a pious gentleman of good character."

Vanini's supposed crime was the assertion that Nature was the sole mistress of the universe, and her laws the supreme standards of action to which all things were bound to conform. What is of interest here is the technique of the heresy-hunting witness, Francon. From Mr. Owen's work the following may be quoted:

"He is the Judas Iscariot among the followers of the young philosopher. Affecting to be a disciple, and a diligent attendant at his lectures, he contrived every opportunity of 'drawing out' his impetuous and free-spoken teacher, and carefully noting what appeared heretical or dangerous propositions. . . .

"If we may credit the Jesuit Garasse, this 'honest gentleman' came to Toulouse in 1618, and his arrival is therefore contemporaneous with the commencement of Vanini's troubles. By treacherously professing adherence to his freer utterances, he seems to have wormed himself to a considerable extent into the confidence and intimate friendship of the poor unsuspecting philosopher. We are told indeed that on different occasions he was so much shocked by hearing Vanini's impieties that his hand found its way to the hilt of his dagger, and he was on the point of constituting himself both judge and executioner. . . . Garasse also tells us . . . that de Francon was the first who **discovered** the impieties of Vanini. . . ."

The penalty suffered by Vanini can be

surmised, but the Catholic historian (Graymond) seems to enjoy writing of it, for he describes the execution of Vanini thus:

"Before putting fire to the stake, Vanini was ordered to put forth his sacrilegious tongue for the knife. He refused; it was necessary to employ pincers to draw it forth, and when the executioner's instrument seized and cut it off never was heard a more horrible cry. One might have thought that he heard the bellowing of an ox which was being slaughtered."

## Insemination vs. Concupiscence

by OTTO PAULS

It is said that no other religion has so much trouble with sex as has the Christian religion. Beginning with St. Paul and continuing through the Church Fathers, sex—concupiscence—has loomed large and sinful; with some it was almost an obsession.

The implications of the Garden of Eden myth became firmly fixed in Christian theology as "original sin." It is there today. In the book of Daniel, a Jewish prophet, Chapter 13 (omitted in the King James version) contains a story of Susanna and the elders, in which justice is rendered to a woman unjustly accused of adultery. In Christian theology woman is held to be the cause of Adam's "fall" and the source of "original sin" by all the Church Fathers, including Tertullian, Sts. Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, Thomas and Bernard. Some of these denounced women for their concupiscence in language that our conventions forbid the use of today.

For various reasons, in countries like the United States there has developed a desire to limit families and control population. This stimulates the use of contraceptives, abortion, etc.; some sects advocate a "rhythm method" of avoiding pregnancy and nullifying God's command in Genesis to "be fruitful and multiply." Nevertheless, the population continues to increase. In some countries where the population exceeds the



available food supply the use of contraceptives is officially promoted; but progress is slow and the obstacles many.

The ages-old struggle of the theologians to rectify God's error in making men and women concupiscent can now be brought to a successful conclusion. By means of artificial insemination a prize bull on an Iowa farm becomes the father of a prize calf by a cow on the plains of Texas. Eugenic selection by the cattle breeder has greatly improved strains and promoted desirable characteristics.

Applied to the human family, artificial insemination may so improve the coming generations that the millennium will be here. Concupiscence will no longer rear its sinful head in our midst and great quantities of theological legislation on sex and eroticism may then be tossed in the trash bin of things obsolete.

Illicit, or natural, insemination will of course be made unlawful; prohibition of marriage will make divorce a thing of the past, thus banishing another clerical bogeyman; population will be fully controlled; hunger-stimulated wars will no longer vex mankind. By one mighty stroke, artificial insemination promises to usher in the golden age—and release the clergy from further efforts to make men and women different from the way their God designed them.

## A CREED

by Charles Podsen

So live that when your life is done  
You truly feel that you have won.

Not riches, pelf or earthly fame  
But what is more, your own good name.

That you have lived so you can say:  
I helped one man on ev'ry day.

That you have lived for your whole race  
And not alone for your small space.

So you can say to all the earth:  
You're better now for my own birth.

Leave it better for your living;  
Peace be with you—Love is giving.

# we honor . . .

by JOHN A. ENGLISH

## SEPTEMBER

2. **Henry George**, 1839-1897, U.S. political economist, author of "Progress and Poverty," a classic argument for the single land tax to discourage land hoarding and to encourage commercial activity and private enterprise.
6. **Jane Addams**, 1860-1935, U.S. social worker and reformer. A leading suffragette and pacifist.
7. **George Louis Le Clerc Muffon**, 1707-1788, French natural philosopher and writer, who made an early contribution to the theory of evolution.
12. **Henry L. Mencken**, 1880-1956, U.S. writer, editor and iconoclast. Author of the prominent "The American Language" and "Treatise on the Gods." Critical of American customs but a mainstay of individualism.
14. **Dante Alighieri** died, 1265-1321, Italian poet, scholar and humanist. His "Divine Comedy" and other works show his awareness of humanity, science and philosophy and put him on the threshold of the renaissance. Opposed to the temporal domination of the papacy, he spent his last two decades in exile.
14. **F. H. A. Von Humboldt**, 1769-1859, German natural scientist and explorer, who also did important work in geography, botany and geology.
14. **Margaret Sanger**, 1883- , U.S. social reformer and pioneer in planned parenthood (birth control). Endured numerous arrests and jailings for trying to ease the strain (or lack) of motherhood.
19. **Henry Charles Lea**, 1825-1909, U.S. historian and author of several works on the history of religious customs in the Latin church and histories of the inquisition especially in Spain.
20. **Upton Sinclair**, 1878- , U.S. writer of novels concerned with social-economic problems, the best known being "The Jungle" and "Profits of Religion." The November issue of AR will be dedicated to him.
21. **H. G. Wells**, 1866-1946, British author whose books deal with social-political problems in a lively, controversial way. Best known for his scientific or historical fantasies and "The Outline of History".
29. **Thomas Chubb**, 1679-1746, British deist and rationalist, author of "A Discourse Concerning Reason." Regarded by Voltaire as the most logical of the deists.
30. **Etienne Bonnet de Condillac**, 1715-1780, French philosopher of the Enlightenment. Continuing Locke's idea that knowledge comes only from experience, he concluded that much of the real nature of the external physical universe will remain unknown.

# HUMAN PROGRESS

by ALVAN L. DAVIS

Man alone of all the animal world has the ability consciously to shape conditions to desired ends, thus expediting his evolution. This ability is both mental and intellectual. It makes use of the accumulated knowledge from life's experience. The meticulously painstaking researches that are now carried out develop the data which when codified and generalized reveal the truths of nature. This process is the path of science which makes possible the progress of our kind. Progress—as we apply the term to the history of civilization—is the child of science; and its rate of development is proportional to the accretion of scientific knowledge and its application to the welfare of mankind.

In the remote past man was wholly unaware of such facts of nature as were not obvious to the unaided eye, and in his utter ignorance he was at the mercy of his fears and fancies. Thus, mysticism and occult powers seemed to surround him. So obsessed, he dreamed up or invented explanations of life and its meaning. In this way arose the various religions, all following a similar pattern based upon the supernatural and having Dualism at their core. These religions appealed to man's imagination and so gained wide credence, which for the masses is only today crumbling under the impact of the accumulated facts developed by the scientific method.

The adjustment to newly learned truths of

nature is natural and easy in the realm of tangibles such as farming, manufacture, commerce and communications; but in the intangible field of thought it is not so easy for the general population who find it hard to give up the cherished myths and fables learned at the mother's knee and sustained by the prevailing influence of clerical, political and, too often, educational institutions. So it is that myth and mysticism and ancient creeds still hamper the thinking of great numbers of people who have not relinquished belief in the supernatural nature of the world they live in.

While today we take advantage of scientific learning in the mechanics of life, thereby greatly raising our scale of living, we still cling in the ethics of life to the myths of primitive man. This subservience to phantasms, dreamed up in man's distant past, halts our advance in the realm of ethical values and the planning of betterment for life of everyone.

In our so-called free world, we are free only physically and politically. Our minds largely are still fettered by outgrown myths and taboos of long-gone ages. For this reason we lack in our minds the courage to stand erect and face all things as they really are. To overcome this bondage of ancient delusions it is going to be necessary to achieve a real grass-roots dissemination of the presently known truths of nature and an abandonment of the superstitious attitude towards life.

To meet this challenge our educational system must face a drastic, because fundamental, change in its basic hypotheses and methods of training the thinking of the rising generation. Our schools must drive everlastingly against superstition in every form and must promote a new theological humanistic approach to the vital factors affecting life. Those of us who are now informed must speak out the truth, not shrink from the oburgations of those more timid thinkers who may shriek, "Materialist; Infidel, Atheist."

At this juncture I anticipate protests, saying: "Do you want us to throw away our religion as the communists have, and run our country like Russia?!" The answer is No, not like Russia. True enough, they have thrown off the yoke of clerical authoritarianism, but in its place they have taken on an even more binding subservience to the Marxist dogma of dialectic Materialism and the inevitability of the class struggle which is just as mystic and quite as lacking in proof as are the dogmas of our theologians. Marxism abandons, for the masses, all pretense of freedom of thought for the individual and imposes a mental slavery under a discipline exceeding that of other authoritarian systems. So we certainly do not want to follow in the footsteps of communism. But we do want to free our minds from the thrall of ancient delusions that stand in the way of human progress.

Our churches—those institutions of vast so-

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cial power and potential persuasion—must be brought gradually to favor open-minded study of all ethical values from the humanist viewpoint, and hence to teach not merely the Brotherhood of man but also the Providence of man; and stop looking to the skies for help that can come only from intelligently directed efforts of man himself.

When our schools and churches have thus been brought into line, we shall see man's progress accelerate by leaps and bounds. So let us strive to unfetter the popular mind from the thrall of outworn superstitions and replace them with the best that evolutionary Humanism has to give.

## CHURCH CONTROL OF COLLEGES NO SOLUTION, CHURCHMAN SAYS

The Rev. Dr. Truman B. Douglass Denies  
"Secularization" Caused Crisis in Education

(New York Times News Service)

BUCK HILL FALLS, PA., Jan. 27—The Rev. Dr. Truman B. Douglass of New York, executive vice president of the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches, took sharp issue yesterday with churchmen who attribute the so-called crisis in education to the "secularization" of this country's colleges and universities. He said that church-controlled higher education was for the most part "inferior education."

The crisis, the Rev. Dr. Douglass observed, could not have been forestalled by putting more "piety" into the curriculum. Rather, he added, "the facts seem to point in the opposite direction."

The Rev. Dr. Douglass, a former St. Louisan, was the keynote speaker at the denomination's annual midwinter meeting. The gathering brings together top policymakers from all agencies of the church.

He asserted that from the sectarian parochial school to the denominationally governed college or university, every case of bringing institutions of higher education under ecclesiastical control has been "educationally disastrous."

"There is not the slightest indication," he said, "that any of the maladies of our colleges and universities would be cured by placing church bodies or church officials in the position of educational administrators."

He warned that the desire on the part of the church "to engage responsibly in furthering the work of higher education should not lead us to yearn for a recovery or an extension of the area of church governance in educational affairs."

One of the prime reasons for the current crisis in education, the Rev. Dr. Douglass said, "is the prodigal waste of human competence" caused by inequalities of opportunity.

## DEEP MALADY

Few evangelists surpassed the zeal of John Wesley and his disciples when they officially founded "The Yearly Corporation of the People Called Methodists" in 1784. Last week the zeal seemed to be guttering low. As 650 delegates met in a heat wave at Newcastle-on-Tyne, even their lustiest singing of "The Living Church" ("And are we yet alive") could not hide their mood. By the delegates' own gloomy account the Methodist Church in Britain is sick.

"We are combatting something deep in the soul of the nation," said the Rev. William Sangster, head of home missions. "For this deep malady, we need some deep X-ray therapy that we have not found." Agnosticism, he complained, is flourishing in Britain in place of the great religious revival for which Methodists so fervently hoped. Last year the number of new Methodist church members (current membership 739,000) fell to the lowest level in 13 years; some 100,000 children stopped attending Sunday schools. Every year, for the last twelve years, the total number of ministers has declined; it fell by 276 during the past year. There is a shortage of 5,000 preachers in rural areas, where Methodism may soon "expire." Added Sangster: "We thought that even if our numbers were smaller, we could count on the total conviction of the people who came. But even those in the pews are having their own battle for faith."

The delegates were agreed on the diagnosis, but differed on the causes. Conference Vice President John Gibbs blamed the often deplorable state of Methodist churches—"unloved places" with litter at the door, peeling paint on the windows, sturdy weeds shooting out of the rainwater gutters. But most blamed the prevailing British mood of "humble" non-positivism.

"Who today expects the church—Methodist or other—to say or do anything vital or relevant to human well-being?" asked retiring Methodist President Harold Roberts. Methodism appeared to outsiders to be "irrelevant in the contemporary situation," declared former President Donald Soper

amid halfhearted cries of "No, No!" Insisted Soper: "I do not believe with the fervor I had 20 years ago that there is any permanence in the Methodist Church as a separate institution. Are we not seeing with the insight of a century a process which is inexorable?"

Unable to find ways to deal with their own problems, Britain's Methodists went home, reported one observer, "heavy with an acute sense of gravity."

—Time, July 28, 1958

## ANTISCIENCE FICTION

By EDD DOERR

Hermann J. Muller, the world famous Nobel Prize geneticist and a science fiction fan since the appearance of H. G. Wells' "First Men in the Moon," complained in the Nov. 6, 1957, issue of *The Humanist* that a great deal of antisience is rearing its ugly head in that branch of literature loosely described as "science fiction." Dr. Muller also noted that "this lapse . . . is representative of the current recrudescence of old-time theology and of animistic supersitition in general, with all their associated spiritistic and mystical beliefs" and that "to attach the appellation 'science fiction' to fables that merely represent outgrowths of the ancient dualistic superstitions of all primitive men is a flagrant reversal of the meaning of words . . ." Dr. Muller, in short, is urging that all that is to be labeled "science fiction" be kept scientific.

An interesting and almost classical example of this unscientific trend is James Blish's current novel "A Case of Conscience" (Ballantine, 1958). In this short novel, popular S-F writer Blish introduces as his hero a Jesuit scientist (which is almost a contradiction in terms) who proceeds to expound, as "science," obsolete metaphysical rubbish which is not objected to by any of Blish's other characters. Blish's Jesuit "scientist" also expounds the "special creation" myth, seriously proposes the Manichaeian theory (or doctrine) of good and evil supernatural "creators" (which Blish admits is regarded as heretical by the Vatican), and resurrects Philip Gosse's wholly preposterous and absurd theory that Earth was "created" in 4004 B.C. (or Bishop Ussher?) with all the paleontological and geological evidence for geological and biological evolution having been "planted" either by "God" or "Satan" to confuse and/or "test the faith" of us poor mortals. Blish, moreover, carries this theme through to the end of the novel unashamedly.

As this case is by no means unique in con-

temporary science fiction, I should like to go on record, as a science fiction fan and writer, as being wholly opposed to such a pseudoscientific or antiscientific trend. Pure fantasy, of course, is a legitimate branch of literature in its own right, but science fiction and fantasy are worlds apart and should be kept apart. The scientific outlook has a difficult enough "row to hoe" today without being undermined by metaphysical pseudoscience and antisience. Let us underscore the "science" in science fiction. Mixing science and superstition has already caused enough trouble on our battered planet without S-F writers and magazines causing more.

### RIPS PRAYER ROOM PLAN

To the Editor of *The News*—Sir: I see by the papers that some senators in Columbus, O., desire to set up a prayer room. Apparently, these men have 14th century minds in the 20th century. Theirs is a stupid, unintelligent and undemocratic desire; also, unconstitutional and a violation of the first amendment to the United States Constitution, the separation of church and state amendment.

As I see it, a prayer is nothing more than a local agitation of the atmosphere. I, for one, as opposed to the building of prayer rooms in our halls of legislation in this secular nation. If a senator wants to pray he should go off by himself somewhere and pray and not make a fool of himself in public. Such legislators have no place in our legislative bodies.

If prayers had any value why haven't the billions and trillions of prayers that have been uttered produced some good? Apparently, because there is no one to hear them and to pay the slightest attention to them.

Joseph S. Neuman,  
Cleveland, Ohio

N. 4-9-57

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## SURVIVAL

By C. E. Ratcliffe

What follows, when we 'pass away'?  
Do we then cease to be?  
Opinions differ. Answers come  
In great variety.  
Some say that we, like bird and beast,  
And parasite, live on;  
And in spirit-land survive,  
When life, on earth, is gone.

Some think they KNOW what lies ahead;  
Their constant cry:— "PREPARE!"  
While others say, when life departs,  
There is no 'Over There.'  
They tell us feeling joy and pain,  
For us will ever cease.  
If this be so, 't is true to say  
We shall Rest in Peace.

Although what lies beyond the veil,  
Is not for us to see,  
And though, for mortals, it remains  
Eternal mystery.  
'T is well, as we our past recall,  
Our thoughts shall pleasant be,  
And friends we leave behind shall say:  
"Thanks for the memory."

### LOURDES PILGRIMAGES HIT AS "BLASPHEMOUS LIE"

LONDON (UP)—The British Protestant Churchman's Magazine blasted Roman Catholic pilgrimages to Lourdes Friday as a "black, blasphemous lie believed by millions."

David Foot Nash, in an article in the magazine, said the "big lie about Lourdes (a town in southwestern France) is the lie about God, the lie that says that we have that sort of heavenly Father—a Father who will do something for you at Lourdes that he will not do for you anywhere else."

Nash referred to a "God who sells his favors to those of his children who can pay; a God whose grace is mixed up with geography; a God to whom you can draw near by taking a Cook's tour; a God from whom you can expect answers to your prayers according to just where you are on the map."

—Chicago Sun-Times

## The Egg of Infallibility

Matthew 16 vs. Mark 8 and Luke 9

by OTTO PAULS

One of the more obvious interpolations\* in the gospels is made manifest by a comparison of the three accounts given when Jesus asks his disciples: "But whom say ye that I am?"

The three accounts of this incident occur in Matthew 16, Mark 8 and Luke 9. They are in close agreement except for three verses in Matthew, namely 17, 18 and 19. It is these three verses on which the Roman Church stakes its claim of supremacy and infallibility. They are constantly referred to in statements and advertisements by the hierarchy.

The three verses are not in Mark, or Luke, or John. In Matthew they give Peter supreme power and authority and then, a few verses further on, are nullified by Jesus rebuking Peter with: "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offense unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

That Peter is given power and supremacy in one breath and in the next is rebuked as a Devil, ignorant of God and offensive to his Son, should alert any reader that there is something crooked about the cuckoo egg from which the Roman hierarchy hatched infallibility.

Mark and Luke have the rebuke to Peter but not a word about Peter being the "rock" on which the church is to be built, or being given the "keys of the kingdom of heaven." A more obvious interpolation it is difficult to imagine.

\*Interpolation is "polite" for forgery.

### FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES, JUNE 20, 1958:

Edward P. Riley, a playwright, died Friday at his home, 721 Eighth Avenue, after a long illness. He was 78 years old.

In collaboration with his wife Edna, who survives, Mr. Riley wrote a melodrama, "Before Morning," which was well received by critics when it opened on Broadway in 1933. The couple also wrote "An American Romance," another play, which had been scheduled to have a tryout in Cape May, N. J., but was never produced.\*

Mr. Riley saw action in the Spanish-American War, the Boer War and World War I. He was born in Seneca, N. Y.

\* The reason why the play was never produced is because it was objected to by the RCC, and at the last minute it was cancelled. Mrs. Riley picketed Cardinal Spellman's residence in protest. She is President of the League for Religious Freedom, 215 West 98th Street, New York 25, N. Y.



# BOOKS

## "PREHISTORIC MAN"

by Andre Lerol-Gourhan

This interesting book outlines our knowledge of proto-human and early human species. Climate, fauna, and flora of the quarternary period are briefly described. Types of near-man are placed in what seem to be their proper relationships to these and the tools we have found.

The outstanding characteristic of this work is the careful description of the various techniques of flint chipping and the resulting tools. Sketches are very helpful. Here is your chance to learn what a Clactonian sliver is, how the invention of the laminated flint expanded the hunter's territory, and how early man straightened his antler-branch spear point.

France is the region primarily examined, but this happens to be a very good place for this study in many ways. I consider this a fine primer for its field, and its discussion of tools is unusual.

Harry E. Mongold

Philosophical Library, 120 pp. incl. index, \$4.75.

## "REALM OF THE INCAS"

by Victor W. von Hagen

In this readable and short, but highly cogent book, archeologist von Hagen paints a comprehensive picture of the Inca civilization which seems to have risen above the limitations of many of the previous works on the subject. — Drawing from original Inca and Spanish sources, from archeological expeditions of his own, and from the writings of other authorities, von Hagen presents a vivid portrait of the totalitarian Inca "welfare state," with all its advantages and disadvantages, and compares it carefully with the present Soviet system with its Orwellian "selective manipulation of history," forced population shifts, and careful regulation of every phase of life.

"Realm of the Incas" is well worth sixty cents and the short time necessary to read it.

—Edd Doerr

Mentor, 60c, 1957.

## "HOUDINI ON MAGIC"

edited by Walter B. Gibson and Morris N. Young

A fascinating biography of Harry Houdini, it gives detailed descriptions and diagrams of how many of his most famous feats of magic were performed. The book contains excerpts from Houdini's own writings. Of special interest to Rationalists are Houdini's exposures of fake

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mediums and spiritualists. Houdini expresses his belief in mediums thusly: "I am not an ir retrievable sceptic. I am not hopelessly prejudiced. I am perfectly willing to believe, and my mind is wide open; but I have, as yet, to be convinced. I am perfectly willing, but the evidence must be sane and conclusive."

To appeal to the historian, there is a chapter on the lives and performances of early magicians, written by Houdini. Since all magicians like to claim they originated the tricks they use, this book was very unpopular with Houdini's competitors in the field of magic.

Another section of the book is devoted to Houdini's writing, "The Right Way to Do Wrong" in which he exposes the methods used by the underworld to commit their crimes. Since there are not many of these books in existence today, the co-authors speculate that perhaps the criminals themselves bought up the copies, to keep the public uninformed about their procedures.

—Nan Mongold

Dover Publications, Inc., 27" pages. \$1.00.

## THREE VOYAGES

by James Peter Warbasse

This is an amazing and very stimulating book by the man who received last year's Humanist Award. Dr. Warbasse gave up a profitable career as practicing surgeon, educator and writer (Voyage No. 1), played an important part in politics—IWW, Anarchists, Socialists, Single Tax—(Voyage No. 2) and found his mecca in the Cooperative movement. For many years he served as president, speaker, organizer and writer of the Cooperative League (Voyage No. 3).

The chapters dealing with his activities in these various political groups are especially interesting for those who have been and still are active in one of them without getting disillusioned. Some of Warbasse's reasons for leaving one group for the other do not sound convincing but this is not the place to debate that. The point is that Warbasse did not find "a purposeful life" among the comrades.

In 1924, Warbasse made a trip to Russia and was given a typical "Potemkin Village" treatment. In an effort to make him believe that the old Co-ops were still alive and free to function, the translation of his speeches came out entirely different, the mottos displayed were interpreted to him to coincide with his point of view. The doctor was cured by this trip forever from the

pro-Commie line to which so many liberals of that period succumbed.

As a doctor Warbasse had his difficulties with the American Medical Association and later as a promoter of Cooperatives with the National Association of Manufacturers, both of which consider Cooperatives wicked and dangerous. Like his German counterpart, Franz Oppenheimer ("The State"), who started out as a physician to become an economist and sociologist, Warbasse was looking for remedies not only for sick human beings but for a sick society. He had become convinced long ago that religion was unable or unwilling to do the job.

That the Cooperative Movement can supply the remedy is Dr. Warbasse's conviction. He had become acquainted first with a "Konsum-Verein" in 1891 in Germany where the growing labor movement backed and supported Consumer Cooperatives, as it did in England. With a few exceptions which ended mostly in failure (The United Miners Union lost \$750,000 in its Cooperative ventures), American labor has never considered Coops a worthwhile ally. Therefore, the Coop movement in this country never made more than a dent (a sizeable dent, to be sure) into the armorplate of capitalism. Its outstanding success was in the Producer-Consumer field among mid-western farmers, in Insurance, Credit (Credit Union), Rural Electrification and with C.A.R.E., the splendid organization which has made more friends for America abroad than any other agency.

—Walter Hoops

The Cooperative League, \$3.50. Order through Book Service, American Rationalist, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

#### **"SEX WITHOUT GUILT"** by Albert Ellis

Most readers should benefit from Ellis' excellent description of "Myths About Love." A great deal of his book is devoted to the description of sexual difficulties caused by these myths, and the irrational attitude toward sex which is responsible for their wide acceptance. Rationalists should appreciate this relationship between myths and human difficulties, being familiar with the many social problems caused by religious myths.

To a rationalist and moral relativist it may seem obvious, but after all the conventional talk we hear about certain activities being "unthinkable" and "unnatural," it is refreshing to read that "we have no absolute criterion of what is sexual 'normality'; and, in fact, 'normal' sexual behavior is anything and everything which we—or which the societies in which we happen to live—declare and make it to be."

I believe the author is correct in writing that many sex offenses are the indirect result of the conventional attitude that sex is something vile and nasty, and that less rigid restrictions on sex relations would lead to fewer sex offenses, rather than more. What I missed is an analysis of the

source of this irrational attitude in Christian moral teaching, derived mostly through Pauline theology from ascetic oriental religions.

—George A. Fink

Published by Lyle Stuart, \$4.95. Order through AR Book Service.

#### **"THE TREASURY OF SUPERSTITIONS"** by Claudia de Lys

Interesting when taken in small doses or used as a reference book, this is a composite of many well-known sayings, beliefs, and superstitions, often traced to their primitive beginnings. The author says her aim is to "clarify" the approach to seemingly mystifying questions and clear the mind of any possible fear or prejudice."

She is exceedingly thorough in her discussions. An example is the chapter on birds. One section of the chapter discusses superstitions about birds in general. Then, she devotes another part of the same chapter to sayings about specific birds, such as robin superstitions, etc. By giving us two directly opposite superstitions about the same item, she is saying, in effect, "Take your choice. Either both are true or neither is true." It might well make a superstitious person examine his thinking.

—Nan Mongold

Philosophical Library—\$4.75, 317 pages. Order through AR Book Service.

#### **"A TREASURY OF KHALIL GIBRAN"** edited by Martin Wolf

In this new collection of his writings, Gibran, the gentle Lebanese reformer and humanist mystic, presents parables, poems and prose poems of such merit as to leave little doubt as to his deep and abiding concern for human rights and dignity. These writings are far more inspiring than the feeble offerings of our traditional cults.

The "Treasury" includes such magnificent stories as "Khalil the Heretic," which resulted in the public burning of Gibran's "Spirits Rebelious" in Beirut, his excommunication, and his exile from the Lebanon, and in which he assails the abuse of power and the hypocrisy and corruption of the churches.

The "Treasury" is indeed what the name implies.

—Edd Doerr

Citadel, 417 pp., \$3.95. Order through AR Book Service.

#### **"THE PHILOSOPHY OF HUMANISM"** by Corliss Lamont

This is a revision of Dr. Lamont's 1949 book, "Humanism as a Philosophy," and is the outcome of a lecture course on "The Philosophy of Naturalistic Humanism" which the author has given at Columbia University since 1946. The book is a comprehensive and readable introduction to the philosophy for the average educated layman and would make an excellent college text.

Dr. Lamont explores the abundant roots of

Humanism in history and makes it rather obvious that the Humanist direction is the only one which leads ever forward for all men. He does not hesitate to analyse and criticize the faults and fallacies in our traditional religious, philosophical, and social ideas and institutions, nor does he fail to present a mature and well-balanced Humanism to replace them.

At the conclusion of this book, which deserves a place on the bookshelf of every Humanist and Freethinker, Dr. Lamont speaks for all of us when he says that "Humanism assigns to man nothing less than the task of being his own saviour and redeemer."

—Edd Doerr

Philosophical Library, \$3.75, 243 pp. incl. index. Order through AR Book Service.

### SHORT REVIEWS

#### "A Constitution for the Brotherhood of Man"

by A. G. Loutrel

Greenwich, 30 pp., \$2.50. Charming brief biography, plus the United Communities bill offered to Congress in 1933 as a "plan for placing families on a self-supporting basis."

#### "Science and Fiction"

by P. Moore

Harrap, \$1.60. Interesting and informative critical history of science-fiction. Pleads for emphasis on science rather than monsters. Too brief as to social satire and behavioral science prediction.

#### "The Shape of Tomorrow"

by G. Soule

Signet, 45c. Brief survey of man's progress and prospects, especially his social and economic problems, both for the world and for underdeveloped areas.

#### "Missiles and Mythology"

by A. B. Hewson

Leaflet reprinting editorial from AR, giving useful and interesting summary of recent evidences of the low calibre of Roman Catholic education.

#### "Unitarianism and Rationalism"

by A. B. Hewson

Leaflet reprint of sermon to Unitarians, printed also in AR. Indicates some mistakes made by Unitarians and Rationalists, respectively.

### BOOKS RECEIVED

"The Seizure of Political Power," Feliks Gross, Philosophical Library.

"Treasury of Superstitions," Philosophical Library, \$4.75.

"Tomorrow We'll All Be Geniuses," Caulfield, Pageant Press, \$2.00.

Einstein was right in saying that God does not play dice with the universe — chance shuffles the cosmic cards but man has learned to deal.

Eternal boredom is the reward of Paradise.

## At Random . . .

Contributed by

WEBB C. PATTERSON

The Vancouver Sun printed the same War story three times on the front page. None of the readers complained. But, the editors pointed out, whenever a comic strip or feature column is dropped or repeated, the switchboard is deluged with calls from irate readers.

The new Secretary of the Treasury had taken over and looked at some of the new bills with "In God We Trust" on them. "This is pretty rugged. I no sooner take office than there is an expression of lack of confidence."

As patient as a dusty Bible.

Public Relations men, practitioners of what Judge Learned Hand called "a black art," have now a patron saint of their own: St. Bernardine of Siena.

A larger percentage of American Negroes than of Englishmen get a university education.

The Clairvoyant Society will not have its usual meeting this week, due to unforeseen circumstances. (London Times).

A Democracy is a country where the free exchange of views does not end with a funeral.

Notes from a "classless" society: A passenger ship between Leningrad and London has 5 classes: Luxury, first, second, third and tourist. When the same boat sailed under the name of "Molotov" it had only 4 classes. A capitalist ship of the same size would have only 2 classes.

At least 28 members of the Eastern German (Commie) parliament and 2 members of the cabinet are former active members of the Nazi party.

19 out of 20 individuals in this country own no stock at all; 75% of the stock in publicly held corporations is owned by 3% of the people, a study made in 1953 revealed.

St. Peter was astonished when two Soviet scientists presented themselves at the Pearly Gates. "I thought you people were atheists?" he asked. "Please, sir," one of them blurted, "we lost our ball and want to retrieve it."

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## AR INTERNATIONAL PEN-PALS CLUB

MR. FELIX Bourbon, 4128 PELHAM RD., DEARBORN 9, MICHIGAN, U.S.A., is the first American reader to join the Club. He speaks and writes English and Spanish and did the translation on page 25 of the May "A.R." Due to retire in two years, he likes dancing and being outdoors and wouldn't mind lady pen-friends. Gracias para vuestro carta, amigo!

SIGNOR ANDREA FINOCCHARIO-APRILE, President of the Italian National Association of Freethinkers, tells me he thinks our "Club" is an excellent idea.

Proud father Donald Henshaw writes in to say his daughter, NANCY HENSHAW (54 WHITMAN ST., PAWTUCKET, R. I., U.S.A.) would like some pen-friends overseas. Nancy is 11 years old and completing her 5th grade in school, is quite a talented pianist, a general live-wire and a good student.

Some "A.R." readers overseas must have children who would like to drop Nancy a line. Let me see, Manchester branch N.S.S. secretary HILDA ROGALS has her boy ANDREW, Leicester N.S.S. secretary HAROLD HAMMERSLEY has a little girl named ANNE, "Freethinker" editor G. H. TAYLOR is the father of STEPHANIE, London outdoor speaker BERT ARTHUR has a girl. We could almost start a Kiddies' Corner! Read Uncle Dave's column next month.

"HENKELS" (the nom-de-plume of a well-known Belgian freethinker) tells me he will mention the "Club" in the Belgian monthly "De Vrijdenker" and he believes some members will be interested. Dank u zeer voor uw brief, mijn vriend!

ERIC McKEEVER (439 OLD TRAIL, BALTIMORE 12, MARYLAND, U.S.A.) would like an overseas correspondent. He is 28 years of age, married, interested in classical music and serious reading, having studied piano since the age of 5. He is a proof-reader in a publishing house and expects to teach English eventually.

I can't resist saying this—music-lovers, please write to Eric—his Bach is worse than his bite.

Any readers with children who collect postage stamps? The FIRST kiddie to write for them can have 50 assorted FREE. And I reckon I could spare a dozen for the next few runners-up.

Dutch freethought weekly "DE VRIJDENKER" reprinted details of the "Club" in their 7/6/58 issue. We thank our Dutch friends. Wij zijn zeer dankbaar voor uw vriendelijke hulp.

Our first Dutch member is MR. J. TH. J. CORNELISSE of DIEMERKADE 45, DIEMEN, HOLLAND. Mr. Cornelisse writes excellent English and also writes French, German, Norwegian and, of course, Dutch/Flemish. A "De Vrijdenker" reader, he is 33 years of age and works on the administrative side of the paper trade.

ALISTAIR MACKENZIE of 28 EASDALE DRIVE, GLASGOW, E. 2, SCOTLAND, would prefer young correspondents. He is a student and a "Freethinker" reader.

From far-away Ceylon comes MR. AYLMEYER V. PERIES, 31 COOPERS HILL, COLOMBO 3, CEYLON. Apart from ex-

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## GOD'S WILL?

Adolph Hitler suggested that if you want people to believe you, you should tell them a real big lie. Sounds silly? Let's see.

Suppose you could persuade people that you speak the will of the highest of all authority—God. You could then proceed to take your line of "revealed truth" and tie it securely to any absurdity. Then holding the end of the line in the tight fist of authoritarian power you could rocket your absurdity into orbit. The necessary thrust comes from the birth impulse of credulity, sired by fear in the womb of ignorance.

Now you have a masterpiece of deception built upon the emotional involvement of your followers. And though your line of "revealed truth" never existed at all, the paradox is that it is strong enough to keep the original absurdity (and perhaps some new ones) swinging around a perpetual orbit instead of disappearing into their deserved oblivion in outer darkness.

Since the sharpest shears of logic cannot cut an unbreakable line of "revealed truth" which existed only in imagination in the first place, your rocket has now become a racket as foolproof as anything could be! Hitler was right. Tell them a whooper. Just say, "It's God's will!"

R. F. Burlingame,  
Milan, Mich.

Here is a sight

We all too often see,

A costly church

That is from taxes free

While standing near,

A humble house is found,

Which pays its tax

Upon its bit of ground.

The owner may not go

To church at all,

Yet on him

Does church tax fall.

FRED H. COLVIN.

pressing an interest in our Club and asking for correspondents, Mr. Peries gives no details about himself, but I dare say he could give us some interesting views (from a rationalist standpoint) on the recent communal riots in Ceylon and the R.C. complaints against Buddhist authorities.

ANNE BARTLETT of 1008 WEST HILL ST., CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS, U.S.A., would welcome correspondents. The lady doesn't give any details about herself, but her letter bears the hall-mark of a lively personality. She knows some German.

MR. R. J. WESTALL (P.O. BOX 11, KASAMA, NORTHERN RHODESIA) wishes to contact fellow-atheists throughout the world. Aet present working in the British Colonial Service, he hopes to return to Britain in Oct. 1959 and study sociology and psychology at London University. Aged 19, he answers to the name of "Jerry," is a pacifist and a libertarian and is interested in philosophy, sport, literature, art, jazz, etc. He is a "Freethinker" reader. "A.R." reader MALCOLM G. CLARKE (of LUSAKA, N. RHODESIA) please note. You aren't such a "lone wolf" as you thought, either of you!

MR. J. ALGRA of DAN. STALPERTSTRAAT 78-I, AMSTERDAM-Z, HOLLAND, is aged 25 and would like female or male correspondents. He writes good English and, of course, Dutch, is a reader of "De Vrijdenker." (Name is JAN.) — U schrijf goede Engels, heer Algra!

Another Dutch freethinker interested in corresponding is MR. T. DE WINTER, CLINGENDAAL 70, ROTTERDAM-Z, HOLLAND. Mr. De Winter and his wife are in their mid-40s and have twin boys aged 14. By the way, the two boys are philatelists, so if readers have any spare stamps . . . Mr. De Winter speaks good English. Ik hop uw familie zijn gezond, heer De Winter!

MISS AIMEE MUSPRATT of 7 PEMBROKE RD., LONDON, W. 8, ENGLAND, tells me she enjoys "A.R." and "The Freethinker," especially as she rarely meets a freethinker these days. She has two nephews in the Church and is "surrounded by Christians." As a girl she was "converted" and was almost sent overseas as a missionary, but decided she didn't want everlasting life and became a freethinker! Is an artist and adopted a war orphan who is now happily married. Can still be seen riding her bicycle thru the London streets—not bad for a girl who is only 87 (repeat 87) years old! I'm sure some readers can find time to write to this grand old lady with the young mind.

Veteran campaigner GUY A. ALDRED, editor of "THE WORD," says he will reprint details of our "Club." "The Word" is a monthly which carries freethought/libertarian/socialist articles. U.S.A. readers can obtain a sample for 10 cents from THE STRICKLAND PRESS, 104 GEORGE ST., GLASGOW, C. 1, SCOTLAND (annual sub. \$1).

MR. ANSELM EZEABASIL, HALL IV, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, IBADAN, NIGERIA, asks for correspondents. He is quite an authority on religion in West Africa and wrote a very interesting article in the London "Humanist" recently.

An encouraging line to hand from MR. CHARLES BRADLAUGH-BONNER, President of the World Union of Freethinkers. A real internationalist, if ever there was one! He speaks French, German, Italian, Spanish and Dutch.

And that's about all for this issue—later on we will pub-



lish a full list of Club members for the benefit of new readers.

We invite you to send in your name for inclusion (free of charge) and tell us of any special interests, languages spoken, organizations, etc.

The only purpose of this "Club" is to develop and further friendly relations between rationalists of different nationalities—and remember, we can learn a lot from each other—so send your name to me, DAVE SHIPPER, 5 KYVEILOG ST., CATHEDRAL RD., CARDIFF, WALES, GT. BRITAIN. If your English isn't too good write in Norwegian, German, Swedish, French, Dutch (Flemish), Italian or Danish—we'll do our best with your letters.

All freethought, rationalist, humanist journals are asked to reprint details of our "Club"—and send me a copy!

And now it's good-bye from Britain, where at the moment we are experiencing a big revival in our national religion—football!—our season has just started (one good soccer crowd = 100 average congregations!)—see you in November!

Dave Shipper

### THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE FILM STAR



This photograph was taken on an occasion when Earl (Bertrand) Russell, the world's greatest living philosopher, met the lady considered by many reputable judges to be the world's leading film actress, Miss Ingrid Bergman.

The philosopher and the film star met at a reception at Portmeirion in North Wales, where the Twentieth Century Fox film unit of "The Inn of the Sixth Happiness," on location in the neighborhood, was introduced to local people.

Earl Russell lives at nearby Penrhyn-Deudraeth.

Our thanks are due to Mr. H. J. Deverson, Picture Editor of "The Sunday Times," for his courtesy in sending the photograph, giving permission to publish it in "A.R." and obtaining permission for its use from 20th Century Fox.

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